d20 system

What is d20 Future? (see page 6)

Definitive d20

Polyhedron

FACE FRONT, SOLDIER!

V FOR VICTORY

WORLD WAR II ROLEPLAYING

March 2003
Polyhedron 156

RPGA NETWORK

SEE INSIDE

Table Talk

The Only Constant (Mark III)

In the three and a half years I've been editor of *Polyhedron*, the magazine has seen three different formats. Long-time RPGA members will recall the 32-page two-color *Polyhedron*, filled to bursting with the latest updates on the Living City campaign, the Network Clubs Decathlon, and articles offering advice from one Network member to another.

The birth of Third Edition Dungeons & Dragons and the establishment of the Living Greyhawk campaign, timed with the streamlining of the UK *Poly* with the US version, brought about the first major shift to hit the magazine in years, starting back in issue #144 (October, 2000). Twice its original size and full color to boot, the *Polyhedron* of those days had a lot of enthusiastic, heady things to say about a rapidly growing, global organization of gamers poised to take the world by storm.

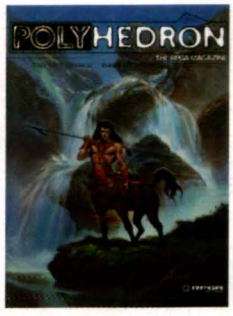
Unfortunately, the storm turned nasty very quickly in the form of budget cuts and layoffs that hacked away at Network staff and sent *Polyhedron* and its editor to a different department of publisher Wizards of the Coast. Enter the combined *Dungeon/Polyhedron* format, the introduction of the d20 Mini-Game concept, and the current look of the magazine. More people are reading *Polyhedron* than ever before, letters and Internet feedback have been very kind, and the magazine has never looked better. Things have been stable around here for more than a year.

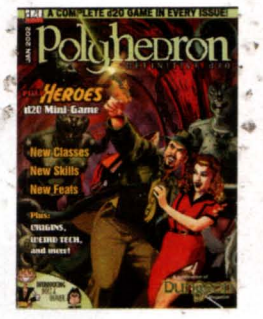
So, of course, everything's about to change.

Starting with our May issue, which should be available in about two months, *Dungeon/Polyhedron* is going monthly. The new magazine will be about 100 pages long, will sell for $6.99, and will retain the current two-cover "flippy" format. The first issue will feature roughly 60 pages of *Dungeon* and 40 pages of *Polyhedron*. The June issue reverses the page ratio, and we'll keep flip-flopping for the forseeable future. *Dungeon's* format will remain the same whether big or small, but *Poly's* going to get a bit weird. Our 60-page issues will contain a d20 System Mini-Game and the usual assortment of d20 news, interviews, and reviews, as well as a handful of new features.

The "short" months will not contain a Mini-Game. Instead, we'll use that space as an opportunity for more in-depth coverage and support of existing Mini-Games, *d20 Modern*, and other d20 System and Open Game License games by Wizards of the Coast and third-party publishers. Long-suffering fans of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* will finally get additional support in the form of adventures and regular features. We've got additional surprises in store, including new columns, new features, and an all-new look.

You'll also be seeing a lot more of the RPGA Network. Over the past year, the bulk of the Network's efforts and resources have been funneled to Living Greyhawk, its most popular program (not to mention the most popular D&D campaign in the world). We've been keeping up with the campaign in the *Living Greyhawk Journal* section of *Dragon Magazine*, which (coupled with the fact that many longtime RPGA programs no longer exist) has led to rather anemic RPGA support here in *Polyhedron*. So, effective next issue, we'll be moving the *Living Greyhawk Journal* from *Dragon* to *Polyhedron*, to appear regularly in the 40-page issues.





The RPGA has more than just Living Greyhawk up its sleeves, though, as Ian Richards explains in this month's *News from the Top*. To see what the new Player Rewards program means for this magazine, pick up our May issue. It'll look a bit different and cost a little less, but we think you'll find it every bit as worth your while.

ERIK

Erik Mona
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First Watch

Previews, Notes & News on the World of d20 Gaming

On the Horizon:

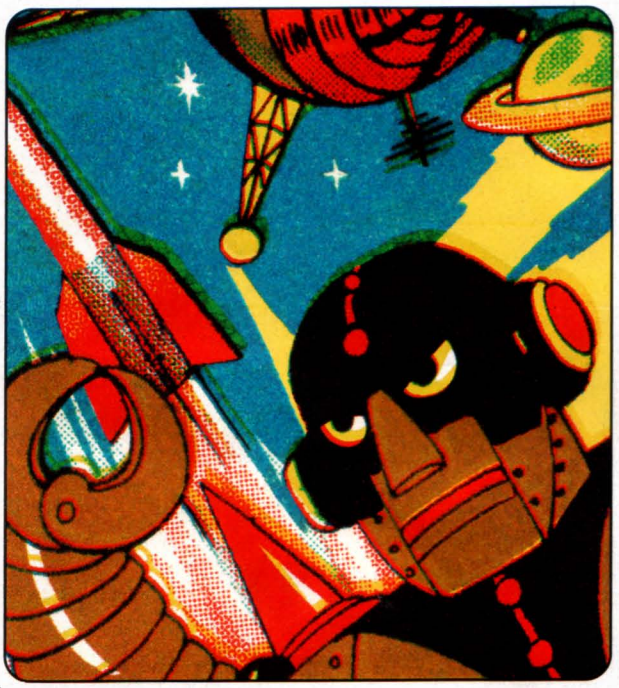
THE d20 FUTURE EXPANSION

The team that brought you Dungeons & Dragons and the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* are hard at work on the next big thing, scheduled for release in 2004.

The *d20 Future* expansion will provide definitive d20 rules for roleplaying games set in tomorrow's world and beyond. It will explore and support any speculative, futuristic setting you can imagine, including cyberspace action-adventures (a la *The Matrix*), deep-space "bug hunts" (a la *Aliens*), futuristic technothrillers (a la *Minority Report*), and dystopian visions of future Earth (a la *Bladerunner*). The book intends to provide a foundation upon which entire science-fiction campaign settings can be built.

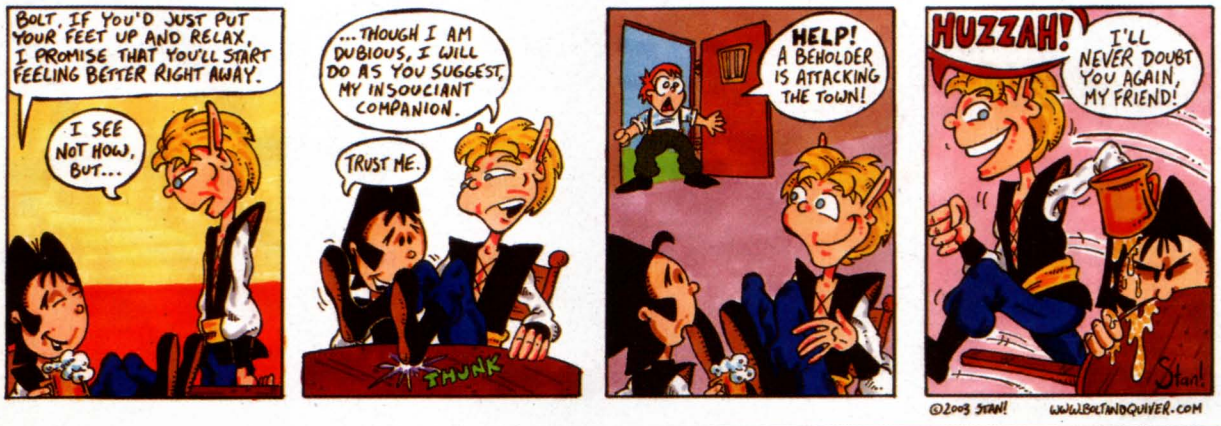
The *d20 Future* expansion uses the rules for character creation and combat presented in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*, but expands them to include new rules "modules" for cybernetics, space travel and zero-g combat, radiation poisoning, surviving hostile planetary environments, genetic manipulation, and other scientific and sci-fi mainstays. You choose which rules modules to use, combining them to form whatever style of futuristic game you prefer. In addition to providing rules modules, *d20 Future* will include 2–4 ready-to-play campaigns, similar to the style of *d20 Modern*'s *Shadow Chasers*, *Agents of PSI*, and *Urban Arcana*. You've already seen one experimental "future" campaign—Dave Noonan's *Mecha Crusade*, in *Polyhedron* #154. Watch these pages for glimpses of new *d20 Future* campaign settings, as they evolve.

In addition to providing attachable and detachable rules modules, the *d20 Future* expansion will describe new advanced classes (based on common sci-fi character archetypes), new skills and feats, futuristic technology, aliens and androids, mutations, psionic powers, and other elements prevalent in science and speculative fiction.



The *d20 Future* expansion will be a full-color hardcover book designed for use with the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* core rulebook (now available in game and hobby stores).

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!



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Exploring the Urban Arcana campaign setting

Keep an Eye on Your Enemies

The *Urban Arcana* campaign setting is a dangerous place for *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* characters. In order to stay one step ahead of your enemies, you'll need the latest surveillance equipment. *Urban Arcana* hits the streets in May, but *Polyhedron* has your back with this preview of some of the book's best espionage equipment.

Bug Sweeper

A bug sweeper is a handheld device that measures radio frequency signals and looks for "suspicious" wavelengths. It gives a +5 equipment bonus on Search checks when trying to find microtransmitters. (*Purchase DC:* 21; *Weight:* 4.5 lb.)

Fiber Optic Camera

This is essentially a tiny camera mounted on a flexible cable, allowing users to peer into places they want to view. The camera includes a small viewer and can be connected to a video camera or monitor. Using the camera properly requires a DC 10 Computer Use check. (3-foot cable w/viewer: *Purchase DC:* 17; *Weight:* 3.5 lb.; 6-foot cable w/viewer: *Purchase DC:* 18; *Weight:* 4.5 lb.; 9-foot cable w/viewer: *Purchase DC:* 19; *Weight:* 5.5 lb.)

Microphone, Laser

Trying to hear someone from a distance can be difficult if there's something in the way. A laser microphone bypasses this problem by measuring the vibration on a nearby glass surface (such as a window). The listener can hear past a glass window and ten feet around that area. The device does not work on any other type of surface. A laser microphone has a range of 100 feet. (*Purchase DC:* 18; *Weight;* 3.5 lb.)

Microphone, Pick Up

The standard microphone, designed to "pick up" sounds within a few meters. A standard microphone can pick up all sounds within 10 feet and still be audible, granting a +5 equipment bonus to Listen checks. Sounds beyond that range can only be heard on a Listen check (DC 15 + 1 for each additional foot). (*Purchase DC:* 12; *Weight:* .5 lb.)

Microtransmitter

Commonly called a "bug," this tiny microphone is the size of a nickel, sending a signal to a waiting transmitter. Average-quality bugs have a range of 100 feet, good-quality bugs have a range of 300 feet, and amazing-quality bugs can reach one mile. For +1 DC to the purchase price, microtransmitters can be built into pens, calculators, clocks, and other mundane items.

Finding a microtransmitter requires a Search check opposed by the Hide skill of the person who planted it. A good-quality microtransmitter grants a +1 equipment bonus on Hide checks. An amazing-quality microtransmitter provides a +2 equipment bonus on Hide checks. (Average Quality: *Purchase DC:* 11; *Weight:* —; Good Quality: *Purchase DC:* 12; *Weight:* —; Amazing Quality: *Purchase DC:* 14; *Weight:* —.)

Video Shades

Incorporating a tiny "pinhole" camera and a microtransmitter, these otherwise ordinary sunglasses see and transmit whatever the wearer sees. There are two models—one transmits in black and white and the other in color. Video shades include a microtransmitter with a range of 150 feet. (Black & White: *Purchase DC:* 23; *Weight:* —; Color: *Purchase DC:* 24; *Weight:* —.)

BLOOD AND SPACE

A complete tactical space combat system for the d20 system.

Coming March 2003

Ask for it at your local game store.

Find out more at: www.RPGObjects.com

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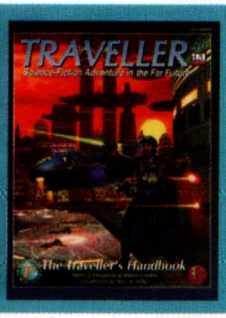
d20 system

RPG OBJECTS

Traveller 20 Brings Back Space Opera



Traveller 20: The Traveller's Handbook
Concept: Science-Fiction Adventure in the Far-Future
Design: Martin J. Dougherty and Hunter Gordon
Publisher: Quicklink Interactive
Format: 442-page black and white hardcover with 16 full-color pages scattered throughout
Price: $44.95 US
For more information, visit www.paizo.com and check out T20: Diary of a GM.

Why would anyone who plays the d20 *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* want to strike out into a new universe with *Traveller 20: Science-Fiction Adventure in the Far Future?* Both use the d20 rules and, except among hardcore gamers, *Star Wars* is a significantly more popular intellectual property. Having served as GM in both universes, the answer seems clearer with the release of the *Traveller's* newest version.

The *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* is primarily for those of us who want to jump into the rich background story of the film. We relish the details and references from that particular universe, adding our own nuances here and there, but always alert lest we disrupt the continuity of the canon. *Traveller* is largely for those who want to create space fantasy, space opera or even (somewhat) hard science-fiction from whole cloth.

T20, like the classic *Traveller* (1977), *MegaTraveller* (1985), and *GURPS: Traveller* (1999) before it, is the ultimate min-maxers playground. In addition to offering two additional attributes to the standard d20 fare (Education and Social Standing, familiar from the original game), *T20's* character creation features a delightful ritual of assisting players in creating a prior history for their characters.

As in the classic versions, character generation becomes a mini-game in itself as one decides whether to go to university, enlist in military service, or jump right into adventuring. Every decision has consequences and many involve a quick calculation of risk versus reward. In some ways, it is like abstracting the first few levels of a multiclass character in other d20 games.

Also true to the *Traveller* tradition, *T20* features a heavy emphasis on building one's own worlds. No one is tied to the generic universe since the core book features more than 30 pages to take a GM step-by-step from big bang through hydrographic coverage and on to political and economic considerations. In fact, *T20* is such an open architecture that it also features more than 50 pages of design sequences to help players create custom computers, vehicles, and starships from scratch. Players who love to play with stat blocks have plenty to nibble on.

T20 uses the familiar d20 mechanics with a few intriguing modifications. The designers chose to modify melee attacks with the Dexterity modifier instead of the Strength modifier to emphasize speed and finesse over brute strength. *T20's* hit point system uses Stamina for hit points and Lifeblood (Constitution) for wound points. Armor functions as both Armor Class (the "to hit" rating) and as an Armor Rating (a "penetration" factor) that removes a number of damage dice equivalent to the rating. Once you understand how this works, you can see how it adds tension to every firefight. You no longer have to reduce the Stamina points to zero or get a critical hit before the victim could start losing Lifeblood.

Gamers who love tinkering with rules systems to exact the best possible advantage will love *T20*. There are so many options and variations that it would take years to try out everything, even in a weekly campaign. After playing in a *Traveller* campaign for two years and running one for five years, I thought I had seen everything. Now, I know the universe is bigger than I ever imagined.

[Johnny L. Wilson]

Alien Races Threaten the Earth

Nocturnum
Concept: Modern-Day *Call of Cthulhu* d20 Campaign
Design: Christian T. Peterson and Darrell Hardy
Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games
Format: 304-page black and white softcover with numerous handouts
Price: $29.95 US

Nocturnum is a three-part modern-era adventure for the d20 System *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. Without giving too much away, *Nocturnum* revolves around two alien races, one of which is stranded on Earth and built a device to pull its race's starships to our planet. The other wants to blast its way out of our dimension and into its home dimension by powering the first race's device with human psychic energy. Nyarlathotep also gets involved, and things get very messy by the end.

I liked a lot of things about *Nocturnum*. I liked the use of narrative sidebars to convey mood and character. I found several scenes genuinely creepy to read, including one in which the investigators discover a child's paintings that somehow reveal glimpses of other times. *Nocturnum* provides maps, player handouts, and strong editing. All the information you need to run the campaign is present, including advice on working the adventure into an existing campaign. The binding was strong enough to withstand my handling while critiquing it; the text is legible and large enough for easy reading. The cover is slick and eye-catching.

A Critical Look

Nocturnum is very spotty about presenting skill check DCs. Some are present, and some you have to figure out using the *Call of Cthulhu* d20 rulebook. The designers don't always present information that could be important, like how long it takes to walk from a car crash to a nearby hotel. The authors' science is occasionally questionable, particularly in terms of how comets behave and the temperatures in caves.

Occasionally, the campaign refers to a character by name and assumes the reader remembers everything about that character. A GM will certainly want to read each section thoroughly before running it and create a tip sheet for himself that includes critical story information from that section and a list of who's involved and why.

The adventure doesn't provide the CRs of its new monsters, nor does it indicate what level the investigators should be at the start of the campaign (I believe you could start with 1st-level investigators). In a few cases, the GM's job would be easier if the campaign included player maps as well.

Overall, I recommend *Nocturnum*. It's well written, tightly plotted, and contains some genuinely creepy moments. You can easily adapt the adventure to a *d20 Modern* campaign in either the *Urban Arcana* or *Shadow Chasers* campaign models. I hope Fantasy Flight Games continues to produce products of this caliber.
[Rich Redman]

GM Mastery
NPC Essentials
The definitive sourcebook of tips and techniques for game mastering Non-Player Characters
From the Regular Dragon Columnist
Johnn Four

"This book is a must have for any GM, regardless of system."
4/5 stars, En World

"An exceptional book about NPC design, NPC Essentials may be used for any roleplaying system."
- 5/5 overall, RPG.net

"The book is a wealth of information for GMs new & old."
- 5/5 stars, Gaming Report

"...a wonderful product. It's an essential product and even if you're a GM with dozens of years of experience I still think you'll benefit from NPC Essentials."
9/10 rating, The GameWyrd

In stores February 2003

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www.gmmastery.com

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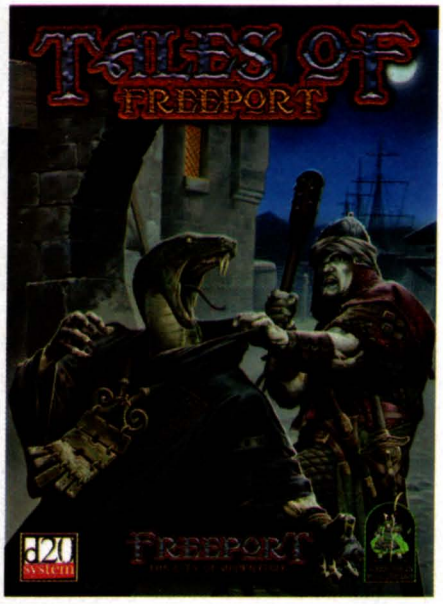
Release Roundup

The melting snows of March reveal one of the most intriguing assortments of d20 System products since the release of the license.

Bastion Press

Gamemasters looking to shed some light on the secrets of the mysterious folk inhabiting the forests and old places of their campaign world should check out *Faeries*, Bastion's 96-page d20 System sourcebook on all things fey. With insights into the secrets of faeries and rules on playing fey characters, the $24.95 you spend on *Faeries* might just make the difference between being the victim of cruel woodland practical jokes and getting to play a few practical jokes of your own.



Fantasy Flight Games

Since the birth of the d20 License, we've seen our favorite rules system used to power a variety of genres from superspies to superheroes. These days, just about any major genre has a d20 version out there somewhere. Barring the sporadically published *Iron Kingdoms* setting from Privateer Press, however, we've yet to see a credible steampunk d20 game.

Fantasy Flight comes to the rescue in April with *Sorcery & Steam*, a 176-page hardcover sourcebook that provides rules for steam golems, blackpowder firearms, mechanical wizards, and clockwork familiars. The $24.95 book is the latest in the *Legends & Lairs* series that includes the extremely popular *Traps & Treachery*.

Green Ronin Publishing

Fans of Green Ronin's Origins Award-winning *Freeport* series should flock to *Tales of Freeport*, a 96-page adventure anthology set in the pirate stronghold of Freeport. Written by Graeme Davis, the evil genius behind *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay's* masterpiece *Shadows over Bogenhafen*, *Tales of Freeport* contains four short adventures and a chapter of adventure hooks. One adventure, *Soul of the Serpent*, pits the player characters against Freeport's infamous serpent people, villains of the original *Freeport* adventure trilogy. The anthology retails for $16.95.

The best GM isn't always the best cartographer, so Green Ronin's teamed up with one of the best cartographers in the gaming industry to produce *Todd Gamble's Cartographica*, a 64-page full-color treasury of maps appropriate for any d20 fantasy campaign. The $16,95 collection features maps of dungeons, subterranean lairs, overland routes, castles, and more.

Gamers interested in Biblical History will want to spend a few shekels on *Testament: Roleplaying in the Biblical Era*, a complete d20 campaign setting from veteran designer Scott Bennie (*Gamer's Handbook of the Marvel Universe*). *Testament* lets players assume the role of a "wandering Babylonian magus, a sorcerer in service of Pharaoh, a Canaanite maker of idols, or a prophet of the God of Israel," among several other options. New feats, monsters, classes, and rules for barter, curses, piety, and mass combat immerse players in an age of prophets. ($29.95)

Malhavoc Press

In March, *Dungeon Master's Guide* author Monte Cook gives divine spellcasters the *Book of Eldritch Might* treatment with the *Book of Hallowed Might*, a 48-page sourcebook loaded

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

with more than 100 new spells, new prestige classes, monsters, feats, and magic items. Cook even provides alternate takes on the ranger and paladin classes and still has time to give readers an optional alignment system to replace the one found in the D&D core rules. ($10.95)

Mystic Eye Games

In addition to fleshing out their *Hunt: Rise of Evil* campaign setting, Mystic Eye's been busy discovering and developing some of the best electronic products, previously available only online, for publication.

One such product, *Tournaments, Fairs & Taverns*, first appeared back in May from Natural 20 Press, the online publishing arm of the EN World d20 supersite (www.enworld.org). The 96-page print version features rules for more than 30 "games within the game," including card games, archery tournaments, and even armwrestling. In addition to a sample tournament, fair, and tavern, the $16.95 March release contains expanded rules for figuring out how much your character can drink before he falls under the table.

Mystic Eye's also turned its Sauron-like gaze to *Dragonstar*, the science-fantasy campaign setting originally published by Fantasy Flight Games. The Eye's been releasing supplementary *Dragonstar* adventures and sourcebooks under a special license with FFG, the latest of which is *Heart of the Machine*, a 64-page adventure/supplement designed for 4th-level characters. The book includes new spells, robots, vehicles, spaceships and a rules subsystem called the Chase Randomizer, which promises to provide "a quick and easy method for determining hazards and obstacles during a high-speed chase." ($13.99)

Paradigm Concepts

Last year, Paradigm Concepts (masters of the RPGA's LIVING ARCANIS campaign) teamed with Green Ronin Publishing to present *OGL Interlock*, a series of thematically linked d20 sourcebooks focused on related monster races. *Unveiled Masters: The Essential Guide to Mindflayers*, by Steve Kenson, is the latest in the series, a companion volume to Green Ronin's *Plot & Poison: A Guidebook to Drow*. For $19.99, the secrets of everyone's favorite braineaters can be yours to cherish forever.

Mongoose Goes License Crazy

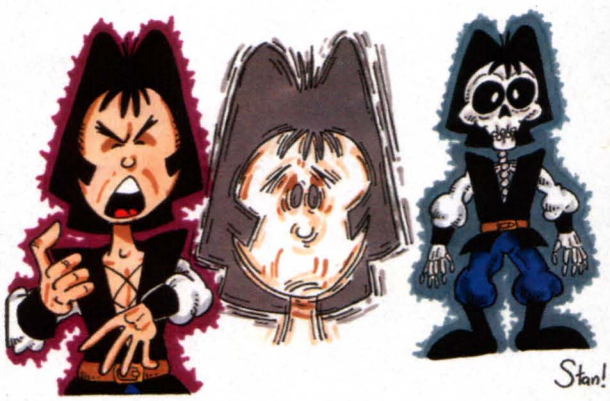
Until recently, British publisher Mongoose Publishing was best known for putting out as many products in a month than most d20 publishers manage in an entire year. In 2002, the company entered a new phase with an aggressive pursuit of licensed properties. Last year saw the release of d20 RPGs based on *Judge Dredd* and *Slaine*, two popular features of British comics "megazine" 2000 AD. The company recently announced plans for three additional licensed d20 stand-alone RPGs.

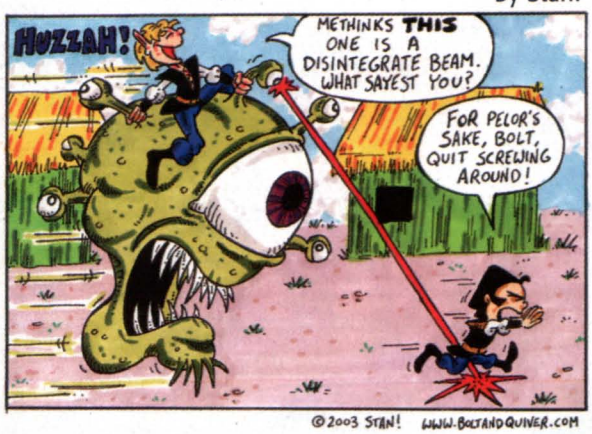
LONE WOLF: If you grew up in the '80s, chances are pretty strong you've got a half-dozen *Lone Wolf* adventure books stashed away in your closet. The game books put the reader in the role of Lone Wolf, a psychic Kai Lord adventurer who got into all sorts of swords and sorcery scrapes in the world of Magnamund. The game, set for a late 2003 release, will be set 50 years prior to the adventure books. Original *Lone Wolf* author Joe Dever will contribute.

CONAN: January, 2004 will see the release of *Conan d20*, which promises to give gamers a chance for high adventure in the world originally created by fantasy patriarch Robert E. Howard. Mongoose's license extends to all aspects of Conan's world, including stories by authors other than Howard, comic books, and the popular films. Most enticingly, *Conan* license holder Paradox Entertainment has promised to comb their archives for unpublished descriptive texts to help Mongoose flesh out the world of Hyboria.

MYSTERY LICENSE: At press time, Mongoose officials remained unable to announce their third license, a game based on a film and television science fiction property. Internet guesses include *X-Files* and *Buck Rogers*, but *Babylon 5* seems like a sure thing. Whatever it is, it comes out in May.

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!





RPGA NETWORK

News from the Top

Player Rewards and the GM Program

Since the December launch of the D&D Player Rewards Program (*News from the Top*, *Polyhedron* #155), RPGA HQ has received several emails from GMs who worry that the new program caters to players and hence actively discourages GMs. These GMs point out the huge commitment they have made to make the RPGA Network the unique and exceptional organization it is today. And they're right—GMs are the lifeblood of this association. Without so many excellent GMs, there wouldn't be any games for our members to enjoy. I don't think saying so takes anything away from our stable of great scenario writers, but without the GMs, even the best-written scenario wouldn't do a member any good at all.

So, allow me to set the record straight. At last year's Winter Fantasy (January, 2002), I told members that the RPGA was at work on a new GM Program. That program has started, and is about to further expand. On July 1st, 2002, we launched the new judge ranking system with the Herald-level online judge qualification test. Soon, we'll expand that test to include tests for Master-level and beyond.

Some readers will remember that I wrote about this program back in *Polyhedron* #153, where I briefly outlined the RPGA's plan to encourage GM development. As I mentioned then, the ranks in the new system map fairly closely to the old judge levels. All ranked GMs will be placed into the new program at their current judge level (or equivalent) and will retain that level so long as they qualify (see www.rpga.com for more on qualifications). We will maintain the system annually, and benefits related to the program will soon appear on the Network's website.

But be assured that we're aware that the more you judge, the less often you'll be able to participate in the Player Rewards Program. Don't despair! To recognize the extraordinary commitment required to rise through the GM Program, we'll establish mounting rewards for that program, too. These rewards will be similar to those of the Player program, but geared more specifically to GMs.

Who's In Charge?

Several members have recently expressed curiosity about how the RPGA Network goes about developing its programs. To give a specific example, the GM Program is driven by HQ but is informed by member contributors from around the world, ensuring global centricity.

Die, Die-Bumps, Die

For the past several years, the RPGA has awarded event winners with "die-bump" certificates, pieces of paper that grant a minor benefit (usually a +1 to a specific die roll) in Living campaign play. Following this year's Winter Fantasy (January 23-26, 2003), we'll no longer be issuing these certificates. All existing die-bump certificates remain "game legal" until and including June 30, 2003. After that date, die-bumps will no longer provide any benefit to the RPGA member.

So why are we taking this move? Members have complained about the certificates for years, often disliking the fact that a certificate earned in one Living campaign can be used in another. Since the new D&D Player Rewards system offers benefits called Campaign Cards with in-game effects very similar to die-bumps, now seemed like an appropriate time to put the old die-bumps to death. The new Campaign Cards will be much more focused on specific campaigns.

Et Tu, Service Points?

Speaking of new changes to old programs, we've been getting a lot of mail and questions from long-time RPGA members wondering about how to redeem their service points. Service points were an old way of saying "thanks" to those members who went the extra mile for the Network, helping out at conventions, running one of our many Living campaigns, or even writing for *Polyhedron*.

Though the Network no longer gives out service points, we have plans to allow members who do have them to redeem those points for gaming products. Look for a list of products on the RPGA website later this summer. This will be your last chance to spend those old service points, so be sure to keep an eye out for the official announcement here in *Poly* and online.

Speaking of the Website

I encourage you all to stop by our new and always-improving website (www.rpga.com) on a regular basis. We've completely overhauled the site, with new content going up all the time. The site will continue to develop, allowing us to reach all RPGA members around the world.

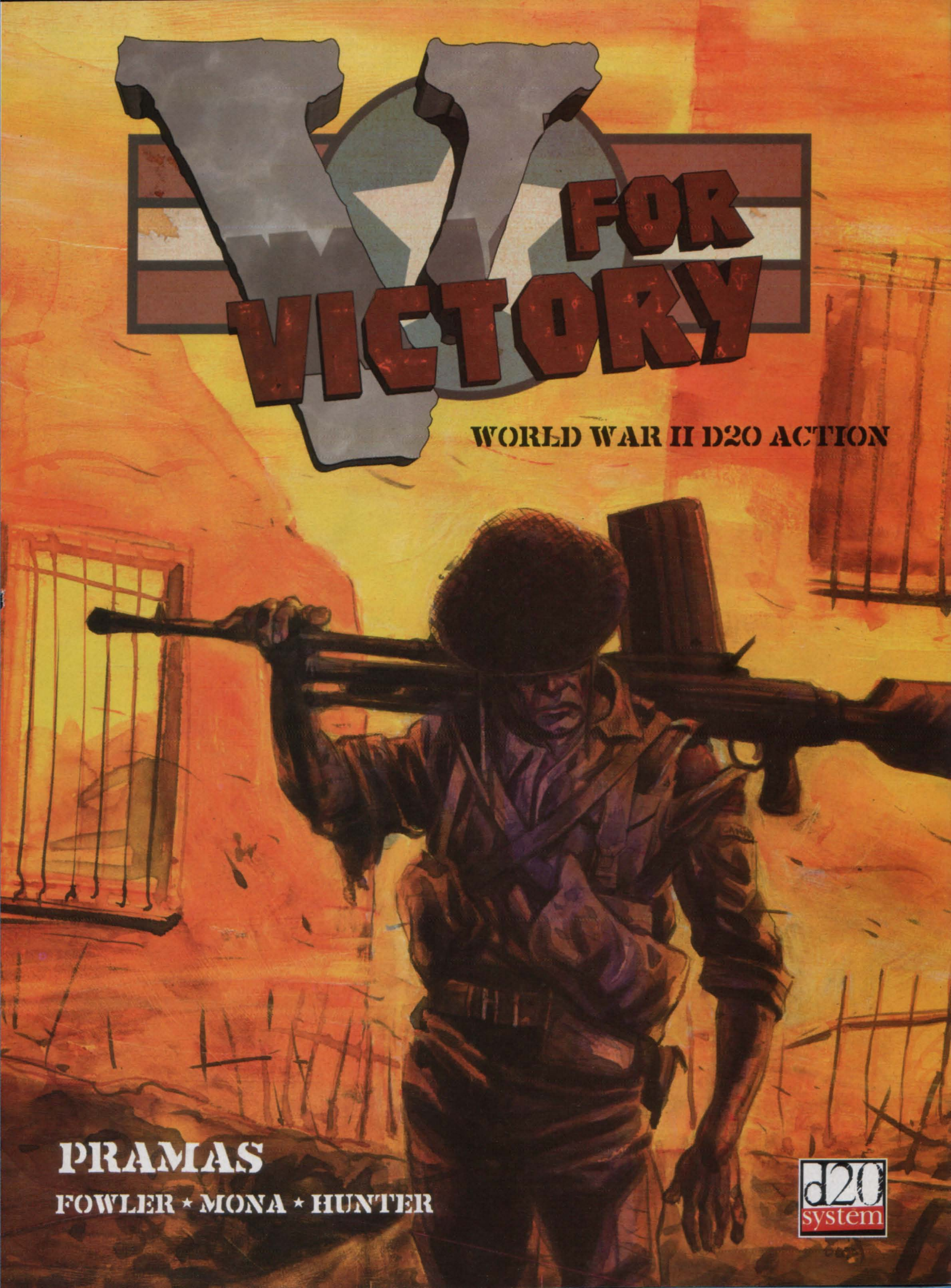
For full information on the D&D Player Rewards program or to take the Herald-level GM test, visit the RPGA website today.

Until next issue, may the goddess Tymora shine favorably on your d20s everywhere.

Ian Richards
Worldwide RPGA Director
ianr@wizards.com

V FOR VICTORY

WORLD WAR II D20 ACTION



PRAMAS

FOWLER ★ MONA ★ HUNTER

d20 system

A Polyhedron mini-game of World War II Combat

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Photographs Credit: Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Hyde Park, New York

This Polyhedron d20 System Mini-Game requires the Dungeons & Dragons *Player's Handbook* to play. Polyhedron Mini-Games adapt the standard D&D or d20 Modern rules and conventions to nonstandard settings and genres. Unless specifically noted in the text, this Mini-Game follows the core Dungeons & Dragons rules.
If you know how to play D&D, you'll pick up the rules of this game in moments.
V for Victory utilizes game mechanics developed for the new Dungeons & Dragons game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.
This Wizards of the Coast game contains no Open Game Content.

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Based on the original Dungeons & Dragons game by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

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INTRODUCTION

So this was the test. Back in '42 the question was, can a citizen army be trained and prepared well enough to fight Germans in a protracted campaign in Northwest Europe? Hitler was not the only one who had answered no. But the answer that counted would come on the snow-filled fields of Belgium in January, 1945; for Easy Company the test was now being given.

—Stephen E. Ambrose, *Band of Brothers*

Welcome to *V for Victory*, the d20 RPG of World War II combat. *V for Victory* focuses on the exploits of the grunts who brought a personal touch to the war. This is not a game about politics or global strategy. It's about sitting in a muddy shell hole with three of your buddies, waiting for the next attack as artillery shells rain down around you. It's about parachuting behind enemy lines to blow up enemy rail lines. It's about crawling through the jungle to take out a pillbox with your last grenade. This is a ground's eye view of the war that shaped today's world.

V for Victory can be used to run games in any theater of the war, from the streets of Stalingrad to the deserts of North Africa to the jungles of Burma. Player Characters can come from nearly any army unit, partisan group, or resistance cell. Since this is an RPG, the focus is on small unit engagements, though these can of course be a part of larger battles. The core *V for Victory* rules deal with infantry and to a lesser extent cavalry (who usually fought dismounted, anyway). Followup articles will give rules for tanks and other Armored Fighting Vehicles, though they'll be written from the point of view of the infantryman. In other words, you'll be able to knock out a panzer with a bazooka, but won't be able to play tankers as characters.

V for Victory is organized into six chapters:

Chapter One provides all the rules you need to create characters. *V for Victory* presents an alternative to the traditional d20 class system.

Chapter Two details skills and feats.

Chapter Three is an all about the weapons. The chapter divides weapons by type and gives stats and descriptions for the most popular (and unpopular) weapons of the war.

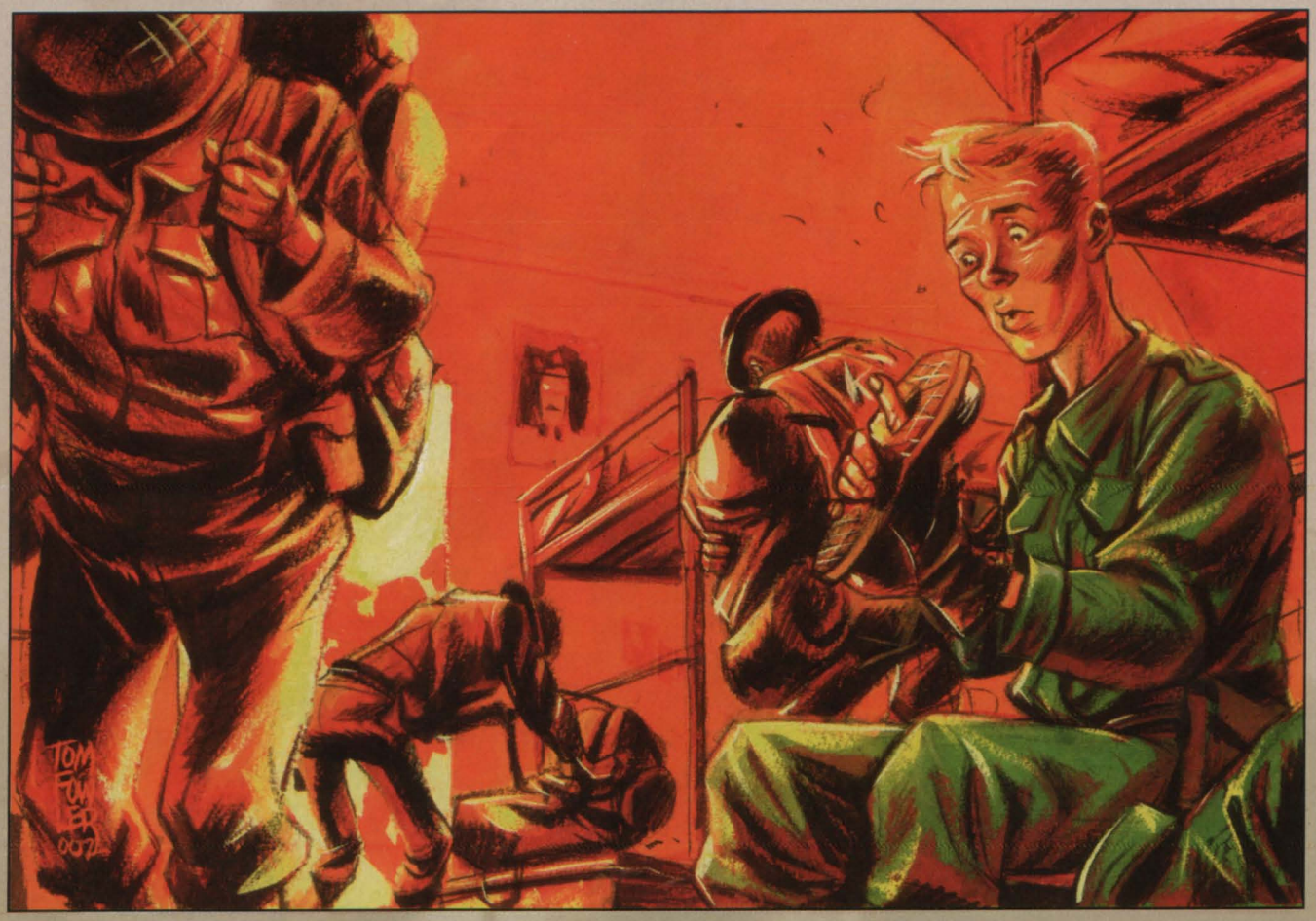
Chatper Four gives you supplementary rules for combat. These additions and modifications to the *Player's Handbook* optimize the rules for World War II combat.

Chapter Five provides GMs with some ready-made enemies.

Chapter Six gives campaign advice to the would-be GM. Of particular note are the recommended campaign backgrounds. One of these, or something else of the GM's creation, should be chosen before anyone makes up a character. Everyone must know the background of the game before appropriate characters can be created.

V for Victory is designed to be used with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*. Readers may, at this point, wonder why a World War II game doesn't use the *d20 MODERN* rules. The reason is simple enough. The design of *V for Victory* began before there was a *d20 MODERN* and continued independent of that game's development. *V for Victory* thus makes an interesting comparison. You can see how different designers tackled the same problems.

CHAPTER I. CHARACTER CREATION



Tania relished her new life. Undaunted by her ordeal on the Volga and in the sewer pipe, she had become a professional soldier, living in foxholes, drinking vodka, eating with a spoon she kept in her boot. She slept curled up beside strangers; she bathed in pails of water. She also learned how to take cover in the front lines, how to track the enemy through the telescopic sight, and, most importantly, how to wait for hours before firing the single shot that killed.

—William Craig, *Enemy at the Gates*

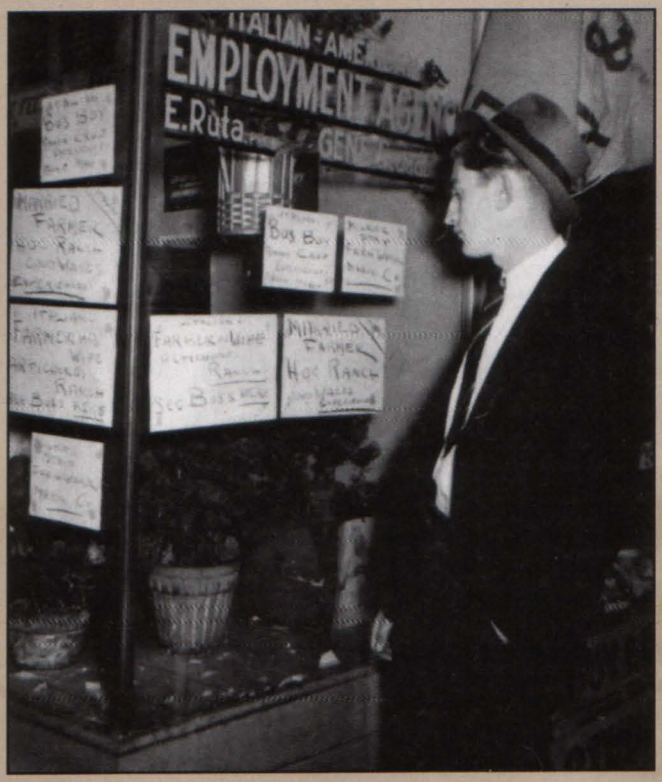
V for Victory is a historical game, so all characters are human. Use the Human Racial Traits as specified on page 13 of the *Player's Handbook*. Characters automatically know the language of their home country.

Character creation in *V for Victory* is a little different than that of Dungeons & Dragons. While characters have levels, they do not have classes *per se*. Every character is a combination of pre-war career, basic training, and one or more specialties. What would be called class skills in D&D are referred to as core skills in *V for Victory* (otherwise, skill rules remain the same). All characters share certain level-dependant benefits. These are summarized in the chart below. Note that the extra 1st-level feat for being human has already been included. Specialties are explained in more detail in Step 4 of character creation (p. 28).

Step 1: Generate Ability Scores

The GM should determine which method of generating ability scores (see *DMG*, page 19) is appropriate for the campaign. Organic Characters and the Floating Reroll method both work well. If you want a Hollywood-style campaign, use the High-Powered Characters option.

If you know the type of character you want to play now, you can assign your initial ability scores. If you don't, note what you rolled on piece of scratch paper and assign and adjust your scores after you choose your pre-war career and basic training (Steps 2 and 3 respectively). Note that your pre-war career will probably result in an adjustment of your ability scores.



Step 2: Choose Pre-War Career

The war changed the world for everybody. People who were teaching teenagers one year were killing them the next. In this stage of character creation, you choose your pre-war career. Your choice will modify your ability scores, give you three core skills and six ranks to spend on them, and provide you with a unique career ability. Normal limitations on skill purchase apply, so you 1st level characters cannot have more than 4 ranks in a skill.

Artist

You were a painter, sculptor, or writer of pulp fiction. You may have worked in Paris along the Seine or struggled in obscurity in New York City.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Wis, +2 Cha, -2 Str.

Core Skills: Spot, Craft (painting, photography, sculpting, or writing), Knowledge (art).

Career Ability: *Eye for Detail*—You can make a Spot check (base DC 15) to remember a minor detail of something you have seen.

Cop

You worked in law enforcement and may have been anything from a beat cop to a detective to a prison guard.

Character Creation Overview

Character creation in *V for Victory* is a seven-step process.

1. **Generate Ability Scores.** Use the method of your choice, as detailed on page 19 of the *DMG*.

2. **Choose Pre-War Career.** This is what you did before the war. Your choice will provide you with a number of skill ranks and other benefits, as well as modify your ability scores.

3. **Choose Basic Training:** This is either literally basic training or any formative training you received after the war began. You can choose between Combat, Intelligence, Leadership, or Reconnaissance. Your choice determines your base attack bonus and saving throw progression, and a number of core skills (what are referred to as "class skills" in D&D).

4. **Choose a Specialty:** This step represents any specialized training you may have received.

5. **Determine Starting Hit Points:** Your GM will tell you which of the two methods you'll be using.

6. **Chose Equipment Package:** You'll receive a basic assignment of equipment dependent on your training.

7. **Report for Duty:** You are now ready for action!

Table 1-1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits

Character Level	XP	Core Skill Max Ranks	Non-core Skill Max Ranks	Feats	Ability Increases	Specialties
1st	0	4	2	1st, 2nd	—	1st
2nd	1,000	5	2 1/2	—	—	—
3rd	3,000	6	3	3rd	—	—
4th	6,000	7	3 1/2	—	1st	—
5th	10,000	8	4	—	—	2nd
6th	15,000	9	4 1/2	4th	—	—
7th	21,000	10	5	—	—	—
8th	28,000	11	5 1/2	—	2nd	—
9th	36,000	12	6	5th	—	—
10th	45,000	13	6 1/2	—	—	3rd

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, -2 Int, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Knowledge (law or streetwise), Search, Sense Motive.

Career Ability: *Nightstick Justice*—You have busted a few heads in your time. You receive a +1 damage bonus when using a club of any sort.

Criminal

You made your living on the wrong side of the law. You might have been a petty thief, an embezzler, a con man, a thug, a burglar, or even an assassin.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Dex, -2 Int, -2 Wis.

Core Skills: Any three of Appraise, Disable Device, Forgery, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, and Search.

Career Ability: *Case the Joint*—When you make Search checks, you can search a 10-foot-by-10-foot area each round.

Dilettante

You dabbled in a lot of things before the war. You could be a rich kid with daddy's money to burn or a rootless wanderer who drifted from job to job. You're not especially good at any one thing, but you have a broader base of experience than most folks.

Ability Score Adjustments: None.

Core Skills: Any three.

Career Ability: *Jack of All Trades*—You can make a normal skill check with any skill, whether or not you have any ranks in that skill.

Doctor

You were a physician. You may have been a licensed doctor, a native healer, or anything in between.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Heal, Knowledge (Medicine), Spot.

Career Ability: *The Healing Touch*—When providing long-term care (see the Heal skill description), you can tend up to 10 patients at a time.

Factory Worker

You worked in a big factory, providing skilled labor. Such factories can be found in any industrialized nation.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Con, -2 Wis.

Core Skills: Balance, Intimidate, Operate Heavy Machinery.

Career Ability: *Proletarian Spirit*—You gain a +2 career bonus on fear checks (see p. 47).

Horseman

You lived your life on the back of a steed. You may have been a Texas rancher, a camel-mounted bedouin, or a fierce Cossack.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Dex, -2 Wis, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Animal Empathy, Handle Animal, Ride.

Career Ability: *Mounted Combat*—You receive Mounted Combat as a bonus feat.

Journalist

You were a reporter for a newspaper or radio station. You might also be working underground in totalitarian states like the Third Reich or fascist Italy.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, +2 Cha, -2 Str.

Core Skills: Bluff, Gather Information, Research.

Career Ability: *Nose for News*—When making a Gather Information check, you can retry once per day per level with no chance of arousing suspicion.

Laborer

You worked as a day laborer. You may have been a miner in Cornwall or a farmer in the American dustbowl.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, -2 Int, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Climb, Swim, Use Rope.

Career Ability: *Feat of Strength*—You can perform a Feat of Strength once per day. For one round, you can add an enhancement bonus to your Strength equal to your level.

Peasant

You were a poor peasant, perhaps from China or the Soviet Union. You life has always been hard.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Con, -2 Wis.

Core Skills: Bluff, Handle Animal, Hide.

Career Ability: *Cache*—Taxmen, bureaucrats, and soldiers have always tried to take away the little you made for your-

self. You are thus very good at hiding things away. You can use your Hide skill to secret away caches of food, weapons, or other items. The result of your skill check is the DC for any Spot checks made in the area.

Performer

Entertaining people, that was your craft. You may have been a Hollywood actor, a member of a Peking Opera Troupe, or a jazz musician.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Cha, -2 Int.

Core Skills: Performance, plus any two of Bluff, Disguise, Escape Artist, Open Locks, Read Lips, and Sleight of Hand.

Career Ability: *Distract*—You can create a distraction as a full-round action. Your Bluff check is opposed by the Sense Motive checks of all enemies within 50 ft. (line of sight is required for visual distractions, but not for auditory ones). Distracted foes suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on Listen and Spot checks for one round.

Politician

You were a public servant, or maybe just a self-serving bully with a taste for power.

Female Characters

If you want to play a female character, you have several good options. Both partisans and resistance fighters are good choices, as women were involved in both groups. The British Special Operations Executive (see Chapter Six) found that women made very good agents, so characters of this type are also a good option. If you want to play a woman in front line combat, however, the Red Army is for you. Women with sporting backgrounds were recruited for sniping duty early on, and as the war went on more and more women served in combat roles. The *Komsomol* (the Young Communist League), for instance, sponsored the training of 12,000 women machinegunners. Women also served as combat pilots and tankers. By the end of 1943, 8% of Soviet military personnel were women.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Cha, -2 Int.

Core Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Knowledge (local).

Career Ability: *Friends in High Places*—You receive a +2 career bonus to Logistics checks (see Chapter Two) thanks to your connections back home.

Priest
You were a man of the cloth. You may have been a Jewish rabbi, a Buddhist monk, or a Christian preacher.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Wis, +2 Cha, -2 Str.

Core Skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (religion), Sense Motive.

Career Ability: *Calm*—With a few well-chosen words and religious quotations, you can calm the fearful, giving them a +2 bonus versus saving throws against fear for the next ten rounds. This is a full-round action that affects 2 people of your choice per level.

Private Investigator
You worked the streets as a gumshoe. High-profile cases were few and far between, but you snapped lots of pictures of cheating spouses.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, -2 Con.

Core Skills: Bluff, Craft (photography), Gather Information.

Career Ability: *Hardboiled*—You smoke too much and eat like hell, but you can take a beating like nobody else. You count as disabled at up to –3 hit points, though you still die normally at -10.

Professional
You defined white-collar. You were a lawyer, accountant, banker, or the like.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Knowledge (accounting, architecture, engineering, or law), Research, Speak Other Language.

Career Ability: *Work the System*—You know how to use the rules to your advantage. When dealing with members of your own military, you can make Intimidate checks with your Int modifier instead of your Cha modifier.

Revolutionary
You worked to overthrow one or more governments. You might have been an anarchist, a communist, or a nationalist. You may also have fought in the Spanish Civil War, as leftists the world over came to combat fascism in the International Brigades.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Cha, -2 Wis.

Core Skills: Demolitions, Gather Information, Innuendo.

Career Ability: *Inspire*—If you are facing ideological enemies (for instance, communists fighting Nazis), you can give an inspirational speech to surrounding soldiers, giving them a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls for 5 rounds. This is a full-round action that affects 2 people of your choice per level.

Sailor
You made your living on the sea, as a merchantman or maybe even a pirate.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, -2 Con.

Core Skills: Profession (sailor), Speak Other Language, Use Rope.

Career Ability: Dockside Brawler—You know how to handle yourself in a scrap. You gain a +1 career bonus on damage with unarmed attacks.

Scientist
You worked in a lab or at a university.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, +2 Wis, -2 Str.

Core Skills: Knowledge (any two of anthropology, archeol-

ogy, astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, mathematics, meteorology, and physics), Research.

Career Ability: *The Big Picture*—Your mastery of different fields of expertise aids in your research. You get a +1 synergy bonus on Research checks for each Knowledge skill in which you have at least 4 ranks.

Soldier

You were a career soldier during the interwar period, when most armies were fairly small. You were likely trained to a much higher standard than the conscripts and volunteers that filled the armies after the war began.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Dex, +2 Int, -2 Cha.

Core Skills: Climb, Search, Spot.

Career Ability: *Improved Initiative*—You receive Improved Initiative (*PH*, p. 83) as a bonus feat.

Student

You were in school when the war broke out. You may have been in college or a vocational school of some kind.

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, -2 Wis.

Core Skills: Craft (maximum of 2 ranks at character creation), Knowledge (maximum of 2 ranks at character creation), Speak Other Language.

Career Ability: *The Dog Ate My Three-Day Pass*—You know how to lie to get out of tough scrapes. You gain a +2 career bonus on Bluff checks (but not when using the skill to feint in combat).

Teacher

Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, +2 Cha, -2 Str.

Core Skills: Knowledge (any two), Speak Other Language.

Career Ability: *Tell Me Why*—You know how to communicate with the troops and explain the reasoning behind orders. You gain a +1 career bonus on Command checks.

Step 3: Choose Basic Training

Basic Training represents skills and training you received after the war began. For most characters, this literally is basic training. However, this step also can represent learning by harsh necessity. For instance, you could create a peasant character whose village was destroyed by a German einsatzgruppen in 1941. Forced to flee into the nearby woods, the peasant became a partisan. Although this character never had formal basic training, he did receive "on the job training" from other partisans.

You can choose from four types of basic training: Combat, Intelligence, Leadership, and Reconnaissance. Your choice will determine your base attack bonus, Defense bonus, saving throw progression, hit die type, and weapon proficiency, and also will grant you more core skills.

Combat Training

While the basic training of all soldiers deals with fighting to some degree, yours focused on it almost exclusively. You learned the ins and outs of various weapon systems, how to prepare defenses, how to assault bunkers, and other fundamental combat skills. When there's hard fighting to be done, your squad looks to you.

Abilities: Dexterity and Strength are the most important abilities for you. Dexterity makes you a better shot, and Strength comes in handy in melee combat.

Hit Die: d10.

Weapon Proficiency: You receive Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (rifles) as bonus feats.

Core Skills: You may add the following to your list of core skills: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Ride (Dex), Search (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

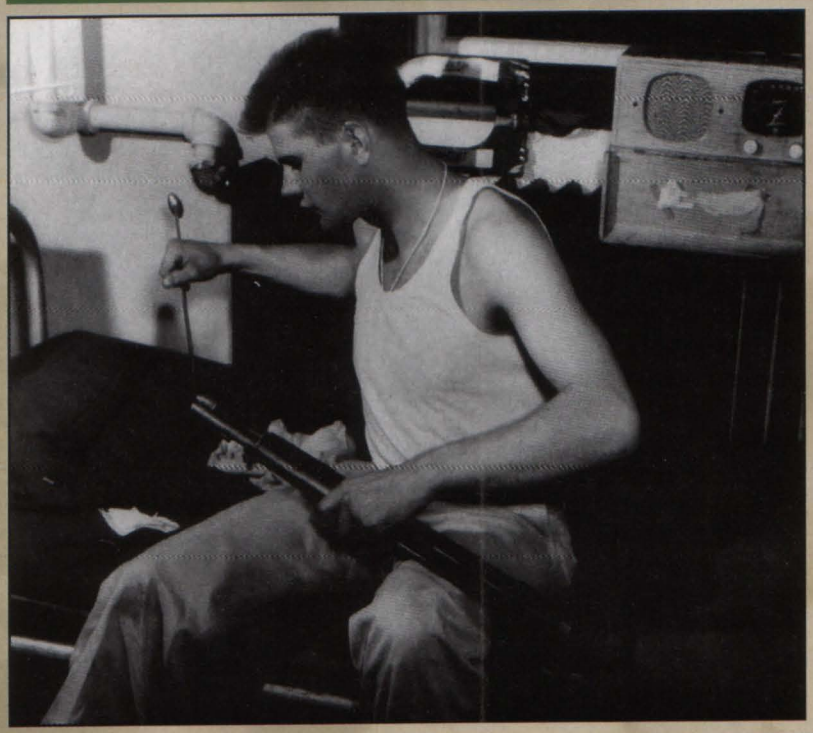
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Table 1-2: Combat Training

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+1	+2	+0	+0	
2	+2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Combat Feat
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	+1	
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Combat Feat
5	+5	+5	+4	+1	+1	
6	+6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Combat Feat
7	+7	+7	+5	+2	+2	
8	+8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Combat Feat
9	+9	+9	+6	+3	+3	
10	+10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Combat Feat

Table 1-3: Intelligence Training

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	
2nd	+1	+1	+0	+0	+3	Intelligence Feat
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+1	+3	
4th	+2	+2	+1	+1	+4	Intelligence Feat
5th	+2	+2	+1	+1	+4	
6th	+3	+3	+2	+2	+5	Intelligence Feat
7th	+3	+3	+2	+2	+5	
8th	+4	+4	+2	+2	+6	Intelligence Feat
9th	+4	+4	+3	+3	+6	
10th	+5	+5	+3	+3	+7	Intelligence Feat



Combat Feats: At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, you receive one bonus Combat Feat. See Chapter Two for Combat Feats.

Intelligence Training

You leave the individual firefights to the grunts. Your concern is processing intelligence and figuring out what the enemy is up to. Sometimes this means going on a patrol yourself, but more frequently you receive reports, aerial photography, and radio intercepts that require your expert analysis. Determining enemy intentions is the first step in formulating a plan to stop them.

Abilities: Unsurprisingly enough, Intelligence is your most important ability. Charisma can also be important, since you often need to argue your case to higher-ups.

Hit Die: d6.

Weapon Proficiency: You receive Weapon Proficiency (pistols) as a bonus feat.

Table 1-4: Leadership Training

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	
2	+1	+1	+3	+0	+3	Leadership Feat
3	+2	+2	+3	+1	+3	
4	+3	+3	+4	+1	+4	Leadership Feat
5	+3	+3	+4	+1	+4	
6	+4	+4	+5	+2	+5	Leadership Feat
7	+5	+5	+5	+2	+5	
8	+6	+6	+6	+2	+6	Leadership Feat
9	+6	+6	+6	+3	+6	
10	+7	+7	+7	+3	+7	Leadership Feat

Table 1-5: Recon Training

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Defense Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	
2	+1	+1	+0	+3	+0	Recon Feat
3	+2	+2	+1	+3	+1	
4	+3	+3	+1	+4	+1	Recon Feat
5	+3	+3	+1	+4	+1	
6	+4	+4	+2	+5	+2	Recon Feat
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	+2	
8	+6	+6	+2	+6	+2	Recon Feat
9	+6	+6	+3	+6	+3	
10	+7	+7	+3	+7	+3	Recon Feat

Core Skills: You may add the following to your list of core skills: Bluff (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Other Language (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (8 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Combat Feats: At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, you receive one bonus Intelligence Feat. See Chapter Two for Intelligence Feats.

Leadership Training

When shells start pouring in and machine gun bullets begin chewing up the scenery, someone must hold the troops together. You are one such leader of men. You implement orders from your superiors, make local tactical decisions, and take responsibility for the morale and welfare of the troops under your command.

Abilities: Charisma is your most important ability. Without it, you'll have difficulty gaining the respect and cooperation of your troops. Dexterity is also important, since you'll often be leading your men from the front.

Hit Die: d8.

Weapon Proficiency: You receive Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (pistols), and Weapon Proficiency (rifles) as bonus feats.

Core Skills: You may add the following to your list of core skills: Command (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (military science) (Int), Logistics (Int), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Leadership Feats: At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, you receive one bonus Leadership Feat. See Chapter Two for Leadership Feats.

Recon Training

You are the eyes and ears of your army. You are trained to advance ahead of the main body of troops, locate the enemy, and bring back key information on their disposition. You can certainly hold your own in a stand-up fight, but you're at your best when using stealth and surprise.

Abilities: Dexterity is your most important ability, as it's key to many of your core skills. Wisdom also comes in handy with skills like Listen and Spot.

Hit Die: d8.

Weapon Proficiency: You receive Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (submachineguns) as bonus feats.

Core Skills: You may add the following to your list of core skills: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (6 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Recon Feats: At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, you receive one bonus Recon Feat. See Chapter Two for Recon Feats.

Step 4: Choose a Specialty

A specialty is an area in which you've received extra training, or just learned from bitter experience. A veteran of the Battle of Stalingrad, for instance, surely learned a thing or two about city fighting. You may choose one specialty at 1st level, another at 5th level, and a final specialty at 10th level. Each specialty gives you a bonus feat. If it's a Skill Emphasis feat, that skill also becomes a core skill for you.

Step 5: Determine Hit Points

V for Victory provides two ways to determine starting hit points: the gritty option and the Hollywood option.

The Gritty Option: This option follows the standard set down in the *Player's Handbook*. Characters get maximum hit points at 1st level, plus their Con bonus. If you look at the weapon damages in Chapter 3, you'll note that it's entirely possible for one shot to put down a starting character. While that is realistic, it isn't always so fun.

The Hollywood Option: If you'd prefer your game to be more like the movies, this option is for you. Characters start with base hit points equal to their Constitution score, then roll and add their hit die and Con bonus.

In both options, increase your hit points as normal for subsequent level gains.

For example, Private Lebow has a Con of 13 and has gone through Intelligence training. Using the gritty option, he'd have 7 starting hit points (d6 max plus 1 for Con). In the Hollywood option, if he rolled a 4 on his hit die, he'd end up with 18 hit points (roll of 4 plus 13 for Con plus 1 for Con bonus).

Step Six: Choose Equipment Package

You can play *V for Victory* just about anywhere in the world, which makes it impossible to provide a price list for equipment. Shopping is also rather difficult in a war zone! While there certainly was a black market, soldiers tended to get equipment supplied to them or they won it by battlefield conquest. The Logistics skill (see Chapter 2) gives you a way to requisition equipment from your own army once play begins. Starting characters can choose one of the following equipment packages, subject to GM approval. Use Chapter Three to find weapons appropriate to your army.

Package Types

Grunt: Rifle, bayonet, 3 fragmentation grenades, 1 smoke grenade, helmet, backpack, entrenching tool, one week's rations, gas mask. Soldiers with appropriate skills may substitute a light machinegun or flamethrower for their rifles. Sniper specialists may have a sniper's rifle and telescopic score.

NCO: As grunt, but you may substitute a submachinegun for the rifle.

Officer: As NCO, plus pistol and binoculars. Helmet optional.

Partisan: Rifle, 1 fragmentation grenade, rucksack, 1 day's rations.

Resistance Fighter: Pistol or rifle, 1 Molotov cocktail.

Spy: Pistol, forged ID papers, microcamera, foreign currency.

Cavalry: Cavalry saber or lance, 3 fragmentation grenades, carbine or submachinegun, saddle, light warhorse, 1 week's rations. Helmet optional.

Step 7: Report for Duty!

You are now ready for combat!

Table 1-6: Specialties

Specialty	Bonus Feat
Airborne Warfare	Jump Training
Arctic Warfare	Favored Terrain (arctic)
Amphibious Assault	Skill Emphasis (Swim)
Cryptography	Skill Emphasis (Decipher Script)
City Warfare	Block Fighter
Close Combat	Power Attack
Combat Medicine	Skill Emphasis (Heal)
Combat Engineering	Skill Emphasis (Demolitions)
Communications	Alertness
Discipline	Iron Will
Espionage	Skill Emphasis (Disguise)
Jungle Warfare	Favored Terrain (jungle)
Interpretation	Linguist
Interrogation	Skill Emphasis (Intimidation)
Mounted Warfare	Saddle Shot
Mountain Warfare	Favored Terrain (mountain)
Night Fighting	Blind-Fight
Partisan Warfare	Skill Emphasis (Hide)
Scouting	Track
Sniping	Precise Shot
Special Weapons	Weapon Proficiency (machine guns or anti-tank) or Exotic Weapon Proficiency (flamethrower)
Tactics	Skill Emphasis (Knowledge—military science)
Training	Cross Training

CHAPTER 2. SKILLS AND FEATS

All of a sudden the Germans stopped whispering, and I wondered if they finally noticed the glow from my watch. If any one of them so much as made a move to reach down in the gutter to investigate, I knew I'd have no other choice but to use the Thompson. I kept thinking, "Be prepared to attack, before any of them can get into action." I had nothing to lose, except my life, and that wouldn't be worth "a promise from the devil" if they discovered us.

—Fred H. Salter, Recon Scout

This chapter introduces some new skills and feats, and lets you know which skills and feats from the *Player's Handbook* can be used in *V for Victory*. Some of the new skills are based on material that originally appeared in the d20 System Call of Cthulhu *Roleplaying Game*.

New Skills

Command (Cha)

You know how to get soldiers to follow orders. While rank is enough for easy tasks, it takes real skill to get men to charge a machinegun nest over open ground, or to stand firm in the face of a Cossack charge.

Check: Most Command checks involve getting the NPC troops under your command to follow orders. Basic tasks like standing guard and drilling do not require a check. Sample DCs for other orders can be found on the table below. Command checks are a standard action.

Order	DC
Hold a position on an active front	10
Attack	13
Hold position vs. a human wave attack	15
Rally	17
Assault a bunker	20
Act as a rearguard vs. an overwhelming force	25

Retry: Yes, but each additional attempt suffers a -2 circumstance penalty.

Demolitions (Int; Trained Only)

Combat engineers were kept very busy during World War II, blowing up bridges, train tracks, supply dumps, and more. This skill covers creating, setting, and disarming explosive devices.

Check: Working with explosives is dangerous business. Any use of them requires a skill check.

Set Explosive Device: It takes skill to determine the cor-

Demolitions Kit

You need a demolitions kit to use the Demolitions skill. The contents very from country to country, but should include exploders, blasting caps, primer cord, wire, crimpers, and other specialized equipment. A small kit would have enough material for five 15 ft.-radius blasts. A large kit would have double that amount. For very large jobs (like the dam in *Force Ten from Navarone*), extra explosives may be required. Make a separate Logistics check to see if the needed explosives are available.

rect placement of the explosives and the amount required to do the job. A failed skill check indicates either poor placement or insufficient explosives. Structures resist demolition and anyone inside the blast gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Reflex saves to avoid damage. A separate skill check is required for each 15 ft. of blast radius required. Typical blast damage is 6d6.

Disarm Explosives: Disarming manufactured explosives is a dangerous task. If the character has the explosive's schematics available, add a +5 bonus to the skill check. If pressed for time, add +5 to the DC. Failure usually indicates the explosive detonates immediately.

Create Booby Trap: A demolitions expert can create booby traps using explosives or grenades. Such traps are usually activated by a tripwire or by pressure. Booby traps can be disarmed by either a Demolitions check or a Disable Device check. A typical booby trap inflicts 6d6 damage in a 15 ft. radius (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage).

Demolitions Task	DC
Set explosive device	10
Create booby trap	13
Disarm explosives	15

Retry: No.

Logistics (Int)

In its broadest sense, logistics is the supply, movement, and maintenance of an armed force. In *V for Victory*, officers and NCOs use the Logistics skill to get equipment and supplies for the troops under their command. This simulates the chaos of the war zone and gives GMs a way to limit access to certain types of equipment.

Check: In normal circumstances, a Logistics check is required once per week to keep a unit supplied. Usually, the highest ranking PC officer or NCO in the group should make this roll. Additional Logistics checks can be made to request special equipment or in unusual circumstances. For instance, if the PCs' unit has beaten off successive human wave attacks, it may be in dire need of ammunition. The base DC of Logistics checks is determined by the type of equipment requested.

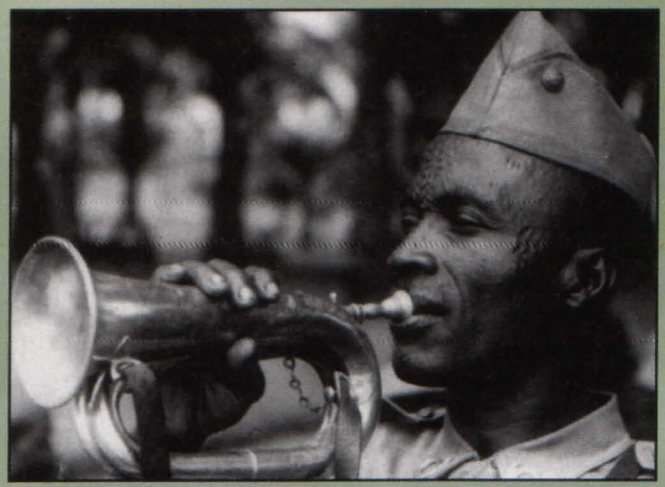
Equipment	Base DC
Common (rations, ammunition, rifles, grenades)	10
Uncommon (submachineguns, rifle grenades)	15
Rare (flamethrowers, demolition kits, telescopic sights)	20

The base DC should be modified by circumstance. If the unit is behind the lines near supply depots, getting equipment should be easier. If the unit is cut off and surrounded by enemy troops, even getting fresh ammo will be a challenge.

Retry: Usually, another logistics check can't be made until a week has passed. GMs may allow more frequent checks at their discretion.

Player's Handbook Skills Used

Animal Empathy (Cha; Trained Only)
Appraise (Int)
Balance (Dex)
Bluff (Cha)
Climb (Str)
Craft (Int)
Decipher Script (Int)
Diplomacy (Cha)
Disable Device (Int; Trained Only)
Disguise (Cha)
Escape Artist (Dex)
Forgery (Int)
Gather Information (Cha)
Handle Animal (Cha; Trained Only)
Heal (Wis)
Hide (Dex)
Innuendo (Wis)
Intimidate (Cha)
Knowledge (Int; Trained Only)
Listen (Wis)
Move Silently (Dex)
Open Lock (Dex; Trained Only)
Pick Pocket (Dex; Trained Only)
Read Lips (Int; Trained Only)
Ride (Dex)
Search (Int)
Sense Motive (Wis)
Spot (Wis)
Swim (Str)
Tumble (Dex; Trained Only)
Use Rope (Dex)
Wilderness Lore (Wis)



Special: Logistics is an Intelligence-based skill because it involves planning and coordination. At the GM's option, you may substitute Charisma for Intelligence to represent wheeler-dealer soldiers who know how to work the system.

Operate Heavy Machinery (Dex; Trained Only)
Use this skill to operate a crane, a forklift, a tractor, or similar machines.

Check: Make a check when there's some unusual circumstance, such as driving a bulldozer at fuel tanks while Japanese soldiers shoot at you.

Research (Int)
Use this skill to learn information from books, archives, or other standard sources. Research allows you to navigate a library, an office filing system, or a newspaper morgue. It doesn't include talking to people and asking questions; that's handled by Gather Information.

Check: Researching a topic takes time, skill, and some luck. The GM determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the DC) and what kind of information might be available depending on where you are conducting your research.

Information ranges from general to protected. Given enough time (usually 1d4 hours) and a successful skill check, you get a general idea about a given topic, such as the latest news in a sector of the line or the public history of a high-ranking officer or politician. This assumes no obvious reasons exist why such information would be unavailable, or that you have a way to acquire restricted or protected information.

Type of Information	DC
General	10
Specific	15
Restricted*	20
Protected*	25

** Usually requires access to a secure site before a search can be made.*

The higher the check result, the better and more complete the information. If you want to discover a specific fact, date, map, or similar bit of information, add +5 to +15 to the DC.

Retry: Yes, but it takes 1d4 hours per check.

Special: You can take 10 or take 20 on a Research check.

Speak Other Language (Int; Trained Only)
Like Craft, the Speak Other Language skill is a group of related skills. You buy ranks in each language separately. Generally, one rank in a language means you know a few handy phrases, but are unable to communicate or understand more advanced concepts. Two ranks allows you to have basic conversations, but specialized vocabulary is beyond you (for instance, a German scientist could tell you about a rocket, but you wouldn't understand the scientific jargon of how it worked). Three ranks grants fluency, though with a recognizable accent. Four ranks means you've also mastered some regional variants and are familiar with local slang. Five ranks or more indicates complete mastery of the language. You can speak like a native.

Check: Checks may be required to make yourself understood or to understand others. GMs may require a Speak Other Language check opposed by an opponent's Listen check if you are trying to pass yourself off as a soldier of another nation.

Retry: For simple communication, yes, though the GM may rule that certain tasks are simply beyond your ability. You get only one chance to impersonate a native speaker.

Special: If you have access to a dictionary or phrase book or you are assisted by a native speaker, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus.

D&D Skills

Knowledge
The skill works the same, but uses the following fields of study: accounting, anthropology, archeology, architecture, art, astronomy, biology, chemistry, engineering, geology, law, local, mathematics, medicine, meteorology, military science, physics, religion, and streetwise.

New Feats

Banzai Charge
You can unnerve your foe with a fierce battle cry and brash charge.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: When you charge, one opponent of your choice must make a successful Will save (DC = 10 + your level) or become dazed for one round. Dazed characters can take no actions, but defend themselves normally. You must end the charge in melee combat with the chosen opponent.

Normal: Charges do not have a daze effect.

Special: Though most common for Japanese characters,

Table 2–1: Ranks

Most characters begin with the rank of Private First Class, or the equivalent. Rising in rank is handled with the Promotion feat. The following chart gives a basic breakdown of ranks in the major militaries of World War II, up to and including Captain. Most armies included various technical and specialist ranks as well, but those are excluded for the sake of brevity.

US Army	Commonwealth	Red Army	German Wehrmacht	Waffen SS	Japan
Captain	Captain	Kapitan	Hauptmann	SS-Hauptsturmführer	Tai-i
1st Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Starshiy Leitenant	Oberleutnant	SS-Obersturmführer	Chū-i
2nd Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	Leitenant	Leutnant	SS-Untersturmführer	Shō-i
First or Master Sergeant	Regimental Sergeant-Major	Starshina	Stabsfeldwebel	SS-Sturmscharführer	Sōchō
Technical Sergeant	Sergeant-Major	Starshiy Serzhant	Oberfeldwebel	SS-Hauptscharführer	Gunsō
Staff Sergeant	—	Serzhant	Feldwebel	SS-Oberscharführer	Gochō
Sergeant	Sergeant	Mladshiy Serzhant	Unterfeldwebel	SS-Scharführer	Heichō
Corporal	Corporal	Efreitor	Obergefreiter	SS-Unterscarführer	Jōtōhei
Private 1st Class	Lance Corporal	—	Oberschütze	SS-Oberschütze	Ittōhei
Private	Private	Ryadovoy	Schütze	SS-Schütze	Nitōhei

this feat can be taken by any character, representing fearsomeness in melee combat.

Block Fighter [Combat, General]
You are experienced in urban combat.
Prerequisite: None.
Benefit: When in an urban environment, you gain a +3 competence bonus to Hide and Spot checks.
Normal: A city environment has no special effect upon Spot and Hide checks.

Cold-Blooded Killer [Combat, General, Leadership]
You know how to use terror to intimidate people.
Prerequisites: 4 or more ranks in Intimidate.
Benefit: You may make a coup de grace attacks on helpless opponents as a standard action instead of a full-round action. Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks against anyone viewing the execution.
Normal: Delivering a coup de grace is a full-round action.

Cross Training [Combat, General, Intelligence, Leadership, Recon]
You have taken some training outside your normal field.
Prerequisite: None.
Benefit: Choose any two skills. You gain one rank in each and they become core skills for you. This feat does not grant you the ability to exceed you maximum skill ranks.
Normal: Core skills are determined by your pre-war career and basic training.

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Flamethrower) [Combat, General]
Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.
Benefit: You can use either Allied or Axis flamethrower designs (they used different ignition systems). Choose one when the feat is selected.
Normal: If you try to operate a flamethrower without the proper training, roll percentile dice. On a 1–10, you set yourself on fire and take the weapon's normal damage. On an 11–50, the weapon fails to fire. On a 51–00, it operates normally.
Special: You can take this feat twice, once for Allied weapons and once for Axis weapons.

Flurry of Blows [Combat, General]
Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6 or higher.
Benefit: You gain an extra melee attack when taking the full attack action. All attacks suffer a -2 penalty in addition to any other penalties that might apply (such fighting with two weapons).
Normal: You can make one melee attack per round.

Favored Terrain [General, Recon]
You have received special training in one type of terrain.
Prerequisite: 4 or more ranks in Wilderness Lore.
Benefit: Choose one type of terrain from the following list: arctic, desert, forest, jungle, mountain, and swamp. When in this terrain, you gain a +3 competence bonus on Wilderness Lore checks and any cover bonuses to AC you gain are increased by +1.
Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat, it applies to a different terrain.

Follow Me to Hell! [General, Leadership]
Your men are insanely loyal to you and will do almost anything you ask of them.

Prerequisite: Rank of sergeant or higher, 7 or more ranks in Command.

Benefit: You may reroll the result of a failed Command check. The second roll is final.

From the Hip [General, Combat]
You can control the recoil of a light machinegun when shooting from the hip (see Chapter Four).

Prerequisite: Weapon Proficiency (machineguns), Str 13+.

Benefit: You can fire an LMG from the hip without penalty (though note that you don't get the +2 bonus for firing with the bipod, either).

Normal: You take a -2 circumstance penalty when firing from the hip.

Grenadier [Combat, General]
You are skilled at the use of grenades.

Prerequisite: Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Str 13+.

Benefit: When you throw a grenade, its range increment is doubled.

Gun in a Knife Fight [General, Combat, Leadership]
You know how to use a pistol in hand-to-hand combat.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: You can use a pistol without penalty in melee combat.

Normal: You take a –2 circumstance penalty when using a pistol in melee combat.

Jump Training [General]
You have been through jump school. You know how to use a parachute, how to land properly, and how to get out of your harness quickly.

Prerequisite: None.

Benefit: You use your Balance skill to make parachute drops. A typical drop has a DC 15, but flak and bad weather can increase the DC.

Normal: If you use a parachute without training, you must make a Dex check (DC 20, same modifiers as above). If you fail, you suffer 4d6 damage upon a rough landing.

Linguist [General, Intelligence]

Prerequisite: Int 13+.

Benefit: You can acquire Speak Other Language skills for half the normal amount of skill points.

Normal: Speak Other Language is bought as any other skill.

Promotion [General, Leadership]
You are promoted by one rank.

Prerequisite: GM approval.

Benefit: You gain one rank (see Table 2-1) and the command privileges that go with it.

Player's Handbook Feats Used
Alertness [General, Recon]
Ambidexterity [General]
Blind-Fight [General, Recon]
Cleave [Combat, General]
Dodge [General, Recon]
Endurance [General]
Expertise [Combat, General, Recon]
Great Fortitude [General]
Improved Disarm [General]
Improved Initiative [General, Leadership]
Improved Trip [General, Combat]
Improved Unarmed Strike [Combat, General]
Iron Will [General]
Lightning Reflexes [General]
Mobility [General, Recon]
Mounted Combat [Combat, General]
Point Blank Shot [Combat, General, Recon]
Power Attack [Combat, General]
Precise Shot [General, Recon]
Quick Draw [Combat, General]
Ride-By Attack [Combat, General]
Run [General, Recon]
Shot on the Run [General, Recon]
Skill Emphasis [General, Intelligence, Leadership]
Spirited Charge [Combat, General]
Toughness [General]
Track [General, Recon]
Trample [Combat, General]
Two-Weapon Fighting [Combat, General]
Weapon Finesse [Combat, General]
Weapon Focus [Combat, General, Leadership, Recon]

Normal: Beginning characters have a rank of Private First Class, or the equivalent.

Special: Your GM may give this out as a bonus feat to recognize special effort or a particularly well-executed mission. You can take this feat multiple times.

Rapid Reload [Combat, General]

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +2 or higher.

Benefit: You can reload a pistol, rifle, or submachinegun as a standard action.

Normal: Reloading such weapons is a full-round action.

Saddle Shot [Combat, General, Recon]
As the Mounted Archery feat (see *PH*, page 83), but it applies to grenades, pistols, rifles, and submachineguns.

Skill Empasis [General, Leadership, Recon]
As the Skill Focus feat (see *PH*, page 85), but the bonus is +3.

Snap Shot [Combat, General]

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6 or higher.

Benefit: If you make a full attack, you can take one extra shot with a standard or semi-automatic weapon or one extra short burst with an automatic weapon. All attacks suffer a -2 penalty in addition to any penalties that might apply (such as taking two shots with a semi-automatic).

Normal: Standard weapons fire one shot per round, semi-automatics up to two, and automatic weapons fire one short burst.

Sneak Attack [General, Recon]

You can deal extra damage when you catch a foe by surprise.

Prerequisite: Expertise, Dex 15+.

Benefit: You gain a +1d6 sneak attack, as per the rogue class ability (see *PH*, page 47).

Special: You can take this feat a second time if you are level 5 or higher. This increases your sneak attack to +2d6.

Sniper's Nest [Combat, General, Recon]

If you have time to prepare a sniper's nest, you may not reveal yourself when you shoot.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Benefit: If you spend at least one minute preparing a sniper's nest and then hide, you can make a second Hide check immediately after you shoot your weapon. Both Hide checks receive a +2 circumstance bonus due to the sniper's nest.

Normal: You cannot hide while being observed.

Tough As Nails [General]

You can take punishment and come back for more.

Prerequisite: Con 13+.

Benefit: Your hit die increases by one type (d6 to d8, d8 to d10, or d10 to d12).

Normal: Your hit die type is determined by your basic training.

Special: You may take this feat at 1st level only.

Trench Rat [Combat, General]

You've lived through so many barrages they hardly phase you anymore.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +2 or higher.

Benefit: You gain a +4 morale bonus on shell shock saves (see Chapter Four). If you do fail a save, it's always for the lesser duration.

Normal: Shell shock saves are straight Will saves.

Weapon Familiarity [Combat, General]

You have trained with the weaponry of another nation and can use it without penalty.

Prerequisite: Weapon Proficiency (any), base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: Choose one nation other than your own. You can use weapons from that nation without penalty, as long as you have the requisite weapon proficiency.

Normal: If you don't have this feat, you suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls when using foreign weaponry. Note that this penalty does not stack with nonproficiency penalties. In other words, if you aren't proficient in the weapon to begin with, its make is irrelevant and you simply suffer the standard -4 nonproficiency penalty.

Special: This feat does not apply to melee weapons. A knife is a knife the world over. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat, it applies to the weaponry of a different nation.

Weapon Proficiency [Combat, General, Intelligence, Leadership, Recon]

You can use a class of your nation's weapons in combat without penalty.

Prerequisite: None.

Benefit: Choose one class of weaponry from the following list: anti-tank, machineguns, melee weapons, pistols, rifles, submachineguns, and thrown weapons. You make attack rolls with weapons of this kind normally.

Normal: If you use a weapon with which you are not proficient, you suffer a -4 penalty on attack rolls with that weapon.

Special: Note this feat only applies to weapons of your nation. To use weapons of other nations you need Weapon Familiarity. You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you take this feat, it applies to a different class of weaponry.

Weapon Specialization [Combat, General, Recon]

You are especially skilled with one weapon.

Prerequisite: Weapon Focus (chosen weapon), level 4+.

Benefit: Weapon Specialization adds a +2 damage bonus with a chosen weapon. If the weapon is a ranged weapon, the damage bonus applies only if the target is within the weapon's first range increment.

Special: You cannot specialize with a flamethrower.

CHAPTER 3. WEAPONS

Submachineguns and rifles opened up on our left flank. As the Germans shifted to the right, closer to our pillbox, advancing in a tighter group, I raised the safety catch and pressed the firing lever; the Maxim let out a lengthy burst. However, subsequently I fired short bursts. I saw that I didn't miss and the bullets kept finding their marks. The thinned out extended line retreated. A second one followed, but it, too, was forced to roll back. Suddenly, I saw two Nazis armed with grenades—quite near and in our dead zone—crawling up to the pillbox.

—Zoya M. Smirnova-Medvedeva,
On the Road to Stalingrad

This chapter details the common weapons of the infantry and cavalry of World War II. There was, of course, a great deal of mundane equipment (camp stoves, jerry cans, rain gear, etc.) used to keep the armies in the field. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this article to describe all that equipment. If the exact type and color of ammo pouch really does matter to you, try searching the web for reenacteor sites. Since the hobby of historical reenactment requires such attention to detail, these sites often have insanely exhaustive descriptions of uniforms, collar tabs, equipment, and other gear.

Weapons are divided into seven categories: flamethrowers, grenades, machineguns, melee weapons, pistols, rifles, and submachineguns. Accompanying tables list the weapons' game statistics and descriptions of individual weapons follow. Entry types are described below.

Name: The most common name for the weapon. Nicknames are often noted in the descriptive text.

Burst Radius: The area of effect of a grenade or rifle grenade. See Chapter Four.

Damage, Critical, Range Increment, Weight: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Action: This refers to how a weapon fires in game terms. Standard weapons, which include revolvers and bolt-action rifles, fire once per round. Semi-automatic weapons are self-

Table 3-1: Flamethrowers

Name	Damage	Max Range	Weight	Capacity
Flamenwerfer 41	4d10	100 ft.	40 lb.	10
Lifebuoy	4d10	120 ft.	64 lb.	10
M-1A1	4d10	150 ft.	70 lb.	10
ROKS-2	4d10	150 ft.	50 lb.	6
100 Shiki	4d10	90 ft.	55 lb.	10

loading, so they can fire twice a round. Automatic weapons are, as the name indicates, fully automatic and can fire short or long bursts. See Chapter Four: Combat for details.

Capacity: The amount of ammunition in the weapon's clip, box, belt, strip, drum, or (in the case of flamethrowers) tank. When it runs out, the weapon must be reloaded.

Max Burst: The maximum number of bullets a machinegun or submachinegun can shoot in one round. See Chapter Four.

Max Range: The furthest distance a flamethrower can shoot. See Chapter Four: Combat.

Flamethrowers

Flamenwerfer 41: This German system used blanks to ignite the fuel and was thus more reliable than Allied designs. It was used by assault engineers, especially in city fighting.

Lifebuoy: The electrical ignition system of this donut-shaped British weapon was prone to malfunctions. Each time the Lifebuoy is fired, there is a 10% chance that the fuel fails to ignite. While the shot still sprays opponents in the line of effect with fuel, this does no damage unless ignited by another source.

M-1A1: This American design shares the same ignition problems as the Lifebuoy.

But What Do They Look Like?

If you're interested in seeing pictures of the weapons in this chapter, you have several options. First, there's the Web, which has many sites with info and pics of assorted World War II-era weapons (and again, reenactor sites are very good for this). Sutton Publishing's 1939-1945 series (including the *US Army Handbook*, *Red Army Handbook*, *British Army Handbook*, and the *German Army Handbook*) include detailed sections on the weapons used by the featured armies. The *German Army Handbook* even reproduces a page of diagrams that shows how to arm and fire a panzerfaust!.

The best picture resource I've found is published by Tamiya, the model company. One issue of their *Tamiya News* is called *Infantry Weapons During WWII*. While slim at 26 pages, it's nothing but pics of World War II weapons, broken down by country (Germany, Soviet Union, USA, England, Italy, France, and Japan). Most of the text is Japenese, but each weapon has an English tag. The book's a great resource (and cheap at $6.25) if you can find it.

Table 3-2: Grenades

Name	Damage	Range Inc.	Weight	Burst Radius
Fragmentation	4d6	15 ft.	1 lb. 8 oz.	20 ft.
Molotov Cocktail	4d8	10 ft.	2 lb. 0 oz.	5 ft.
Rifle Grenade	As type	50 ft.	As type	As type
Smoke*	—	15 ft.	1 lb. 3 oz.	30 ft.
Stun*	1d8	15 ft.	1 lb. 0 oz.	20 ft.

* See description for special rules.

ROKS-2: While all armies engaged in the war realized that flamethrower men were targets of choice, only the Soviets did something about it. The ROKS-2's tanks were camouflaged to look like a backpack, and its flame gun like a rifle. Anyone viewing the flamethrower operator receives a Spot check (DC 20) to see through the deception. If an opponent has seen the weapon fire, the deception becomes meaningless.

100 Shiki: This Japanese weapon used the same ignition system as the Flamenwerfer 41.

Grenades

A bewildering array of grenades were used in World War II and accurately detailing them all would take up more space than it's worth. *V for Victory* thus breaks down grenades into some broad categories, explained below. Anti-tank grenades will be dealt with in a follow-up article.

Fragmentation Grenade: The most common type by far, fragmentation grenades are designed to spray shrapnel in all directions when they explode. Representative types include the British 36M "Mills Bomb," the American M11A1 "Pineapple Grenade," the German Stielhandgranate 39 "Potato Masher" and the Japanese Type 91.

Molotov Cocktail: Born of grim necessity, the Molotov Cocktail is little more than a glass bottle filled with gasoline or some other flammable material. An oil-soaked rag stoppers the bottle and acts as a fuse. Anyone damaged by a Molotov Cocktail must make a second Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire (see page 86 of the *DMG*).

Rifle Grenades: There are rifle grenade versions of fragmentation, smoke, and stun grenades. See Chapter Four for special rules.

Smoke Grenades: Used to cover troop movement, smoke grenades have no damaging effect. They simply fill the burst radius with smoke. This provides one-half concealment (20% miss chance) and blocks line of sight. Representative types include the American M8 and the British No. 80.

Stun Grenades: Grenades without fragmentation sleeves were designed primarily to shock enemy troops. Soldiers often used them in house-to-house fighting, lobbing one into a room before spraying it with a submachinegun. Those in the blast radius take 1d8 damage and must take a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for one round (this replaces the normal Reflex save for grenade attacks). Representative types include the British No. 69 and the American Mark 111A2.

Machineguns

BAR: The Browning Automatic Rifle was the US army's standard squad automatic weapon. Its magazine was not only small, but also inconveniently located for reloading. Nonetheless, the BAR provided GIs with much-needed firepower.

Breda, Model 1930: The Breda was the only light machinegun available to the Italian army, and it proved a terrible weapon. It's cartridge was weak, its capacity low, and its reliability poor.

Breda, Model 1937: This was a better medium machinegun than the Model 1930 was a light gun, but the Model 1937 still used 20-round ammo strips that greatly reduced its effectiveness.

Bren Gun: The Bren was perhaps the finest light machinegun of the war. A Czech design, it was adopted by the British army in 1938. These same statistics can be used for the Vickers-Bertheir, a similar weapon that was used by Indian army divisions.

Browning M1917A1: This is a slightly improved version of the medium machinegun used by the US army in World War I. Like other machineguns of its era, it was a water-cooled weapon. In the 1920s an air-cooled version that had been developed for aircraft was issued to the infantry as the M1919A4.

Browning M2HB: Originally designed as an aircraft weapon, the Browning was adopted by the US army in 1921. The M2, an improved version, was introduced in 1932 and is still in service today. The "Ma Deuce," as the weapon was called, was fitted to a wide variety of vehicles and was also available on a tripod mount.

DP 1928: The DP, known by troops as the "record player" because of its round ammo drum, was the Red Army's light machinegun of choice.

Goryunov SG43: Even before the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the Red Army realized that it needed a more modern machinegun than the aging Maxim. The Goryunov went into production in 1943 and became the standard Soviet machinegun after World War II.

Maxim 1910: The Maxim was another long-lived machinegun, dating back to the late 19th century. The Russian model was so heavy that a special wheeled mount (the Sokolov) was designed for it. Its wheels could be replaced with skis for winter operations.

MG34: The Maschinengewehr 34 was the first general purpose machinegun. When used with a bipod it made an excellent light machinegun. It could also be mounted on a tripod and used as a medium machinegun.

MG42: The MG42, the Wehrmacht's replacement for the MG34, had a rate of fire higher than any other machinegun of World War II. As a result, its barrel was prone to overheating, so it was usually issued with two or three extras. Changing a barrel is a full-round action. Such a switch must be made after every 250 rounds fired. Like the MG34, it could be used bipod or tripod mounted, but it was hard to control as a bipod due to its rate of fire.

Taisho 11: These stats can be used for both the Taisho 11 light machinegun and it's replacement, the Type 96 (Weight 20 lb.). Japanese production simply couldn't make enough Types 96s, so the Taisho 11 continued to serve until the end of the war.

Type 92: Known as the "Woodpecker" by Allied troops due to its distinctive sound, the Type 92 was the Japanese army's most common medium machinegun.

Vickers, Mark 1: The Vickers Mark 1 was the standard heavy machinegun of the British army from 1912–1968, a tribute to its solid design. The Vickers was so reliable that one gun at the Battle of the Somme (1916) fired an average of 10,000 bullets an hour for twelve consecutive hours.

Melee Weapons

Cavalry Saber: By World War II, the era of the mounted charge was largely over. While cavalry was employed, especially on the Eastern Front, the troopers usually dis-

Table 3-3: Machineguns

Name	Caliber	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Action	Capacity	Max Burst
BAR	.30in	2d10	x3	200 ft.	22 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	20	20
Breda, Model 1930	6.5mm	2d8	x3	175 ft.	22 lb. 8 oz.	Auto	20	20
Breda, Model 1937	8mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	43 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	20	20
Bren Gun	.303in	2d10	x3	200 ft.	22 lb. 5 oz.	Auto	30	30
Browning M1917A1	.30in	2d10	x3	200 ft.	32 lb. 10 oz.	Auto	250	45
Browning M2HB	.50in	2d12	x4	300 ft.	115 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	100	45
DP 1928	7.62mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	20 lb. 8 oz.	Auto	47	47
Goryunov SG43	7.62mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	30 lb. 4 oz.	Auto	250	60
Maxim 1910	7.62mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	162 lb. 8 oz.	Auto	250	55
MG34	7.92mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	26 lb. 11 oz.	Auto	50 or 250	85
MG42	7.92mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	25 lb. 8 oz.	Auto	50 or 250	120
Taisho 11	6.5mm	2d8	x3	175 ft.	22 lb. 8 oz.	Auto	30	30
Type 92	7.7mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	122 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	30	30
Vickers, Mark 1	.303in	2d10	x3	200 ft.	40 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	250	45

Table 3-4: Melee Weapons

Name	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight
Cavalry Saber	1d6	18-20/x2	—	3 lb.
Club/Nightstick	1d6	x2	10 ft.	3 lb.
Entrenching Tool	1d6	x3	—	3 lb.
Fixed Bayonet*	1d8	x3	—	Weapon weight plus 2 lb.
Knife or hand-held bayonet	1d4	19-20/x2	10 ft.	2 lb.
Kukri	1d4	18-20/x2	10 ft.	3 lb.
Lance*	1d8	x3	—	10 lb.
Machete/Long Bayonet	1d6	19-20/x2	—	2 lb. 8 oz.
Rifle Butt	1d6	x2	—	n/a
Shin-gunto	1d8	19-20/x2	—	6 lb.

*Weapon has Reach.

mounted to fight. Nonetheless, many cavalry formations, especially the Cossacks, continued to carry cavalry sabers and there were several instances of old-styled cavalry charges. One of Italy's few moments of glory on the Eastern Front was a saber attack against a Soviet bridgehead by the 3rd "Savoy Dragoons" in 1942.

Club/Nightstick: While not a common weapon for frontline fighters, they were sometimes used by military police units.

Entrenching Tool: The World War I tradition of using a sharpened entrenching tool in hand-to-hand combat continued in World War II because such a tool was much more handy in confined spaces that a rifle and bayonet.

Fixed Bayonet: Affixing a bayonet to a rifle (a move-equivalent action) effectively creates a spear. Although the rifle can still be fired when the bayonet is attached, there is a –1 circumstance penalty due to the unbalancing effect.

Knife: The given statistics can be used for both combat knives and hand-held bayonets.

Kukri: This was the signature weapon of the famed Ghurkas, fierce fighters from Nepal who have served in the British army since 1814.

Lance: By World War II, the lance was almost exclusively reserved for ceremonial usage. One notable exception occurred during the invasion of Poland. On September 23rd, 1939, lance-armed Poles of the 25th Uhlans clashed with saber-wielding Germans of the 1st Cavalry Brigade in one of the few engagements of this type in World War II. The Poles bested their opponents and charged on, only to be cut to ribbons by machinegun fire.

Machete/Long Bayonet: Machetes were used in the Pacific Theater to hack through dense jungle terrain and, of course, as weapons. These same statistics can be used for certain long bayonets (also known as sword bayonets), though this style of bayonet was rare by World War II.

Rifle Butt: Rifles themselves were often used as clubs in hand-to-hand combat.

Shin-gunto: The modern Japanese army had used a western-style saber called the kyo-gunto ("first military sword") since 1875. In the 1930s, however, nationalistic officers began to clamor for a more traditional sword. The result was the shin-gunto ("new military sword"), a modern manufactured version of the samurai's weapon of choice, the katana. Swords of this type were issued to officers and NCOs. The colors of the sword strap and tassel indicated the bearer's status.

Table 3-5: Pistols

Name	Caliber	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Action	Capacity
Beretta M1934	9mm Short	1d8	x3	10 ft.	1 lb. 7.5 oz.	Semi-auto	7
Browning High Power	9mm	1d10	x3	20 ft.	2 lb. 3 oz.	Semi-auto	13
Colt M1911A1	.45in.	2d8	x3	15 ft.	2 lb. 7.5 oz.	Semi-auto	7
Lebel	8mm	1d8	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 10.5 oz.	Standard	6
Luger P '08	9mm	1d10	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 14 oz.	Semi-auto	8
Nagant Model 1895	7.62mm	1d10	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 12 oz.	Standard	7
Nambu	8mm	1d8	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 15.5 oz.	Semi-auto	8
Radom	9mm	1d10	x3	20 ft.	2 lb. 5 oz.	Semi-auto	8
Smith & Wesson 38/200	.357in.	1d10	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 8 oz.	Standard	6
Tokarev Model TT33	7.62mm	2d6	x3	15 ft.	1 lb. 13 oz.	Semi-auto	8
Walter P'38	9mm	1d10	x3	20 ft.	1 lb. 13.5 oz.	Semi-auto	8

Pistols

Beretta M1934: Originally introduced into the Italian army in 1915, the Beretta went through a series of improvements that resulted in the Model 1934. This pistol served in the Italian-Abyssinian War of 1935-36 and was also used by fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War. It remained the standard sidearm of the Italian army throughout World War II, despite its short barrel and underpowered ammunition.

Browning High Power: The Browning High Power served in a bewildering array of militaries throughout the war. It was originally manufactured in Belgium and used by the Belgian Army and that of smaller nations like Lithuania. After the Germans overran Belgium, they took over the FN factory and continued to produce the pistol. They called it the Pistole Modell 35(b), and it was issued primarily to SS and Paratroop units. Meanwhile, the plans for the Browning HP had been smuggled to England and from there they migrated to Canada. The Canadians put it into production, the first shipments going to the Chinese Nationalist Army of Chiang Kai-shek. It was then issued to the Canadian army and some British Commando and Airborne units. The Browning High Power proved popular because of its large magazine capacity and the ease with which 9mm ammo could be procured in Europe.

Colt M1911A1: This was a slightly modified version of the pistol adopted by the American Army in 1911. It used the powerful .45 round, which gave it more stopping power than any other pistol in service. American officers, NCOs and heavy weapon crewmen favored the Colt, though after 1942 crewmen began to be issued the M1 Carbine or M3 Grease Gun instead. It also saw use with specialized units like the American Rangers and the British Commandos.

Lebel: Though not actually designed by Nicholas Lebel, the Model 1892 nonetheless bears his name. Although not a particularly well-designed or effective weapon, the Lebel was produced from 1892–1945. It used a cartridge made only in France, which lacked the striking power of pistols like the Colt or the Browning. Although outdated by World War II standards, the sheer ubiquitousness of the weapon insured that it found use in many French Resistance groups.

Luger P '08: Technically known as the Parabellum Pistole '08, this pistol has gone down in history as the Luger. Although the German army began to replace it in 1938 with the Walther, their production of the Luger continued until 1942. Although most commonly seen as an officer's sidearm, NCOs, messengers, and heavy weapon crews also used Lugers. American soldiers prized Lugers as war souvenirs (see *Band of Brothers* for a graphic illustration of how far GIs were willing to go to get a Luger).

Nagant Model 1895: Originally adopted by the Tsarist military in 1895, the Nagant continued to serve the Red Army after the Russian Revolution and Civil War. Officers, NCOs, and specialists typically made use of the Nagant, but as the war went on the easier-to-manufacture submachinegun began to replace the aging pistol.

Nambu: The original Nambu was known as the Taisho 04, in reference to the year it was first offered for sale (not 1904, as one might think, but the fourth year of the Taisho reign, or 1915). Similar in appearance to the Luger, its internal workings were in fact based on the Italian Glisenti pistol. It used an uncommon ammunition of poor stopping power, which was not helped by its weak striker spring. A slightly improved version, the Taisho 14, was introduced in 1925, but it retained the same ammo and the same weak striker spring. Both versions saw wide use by Japanese officers.

Radom: The Polish War Ministry held a competitive trial in 1935 to choose a new pistol. The Radom, a reliable weapon similar to Browning designs, won the competition and the Polish army adopted it in 1936. Production numbers were low and before the Blitzkrieg it was only issued to cavalry units and some officers. The Germans kept the factories going after the occupation of Poland and the renamed

Table 3-6: Rifles

Name	Caliber	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Action	Capacity
Arisaka, Meiji 38	6.5mm	2d8	x3	175 ft.	9 lb. 8 oz.	Standard	5
Gewehr 43	7.92mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	9 lb. 9 oz.	Semi-auto	10
Lee-Enfield No. 4	.303in.	2d10	x3	200 ft.	9 lb. 1 oz.	Standard	10
M-P-C Carbine M1891/24	6.5mm	2d8	x3	175 ft.	8 lb. 6 oz.	Standard	6
Mauser Kar98K	7.92mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	8 lb. 9 oz.	Standard	5
M1 Garand	.30in	2d10	x3	200 ft.	9 lb. 8 oz.	Semi-auto	8
Mosin-Nagant Model 1930G	7.62mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	8 lb. 11 oz.	Standard	5
Sturmgewehr 44	7.92mm Short	2d6	x3	150 ft.	11 lb. 5 oz.	Auto	30
Tokarev SVT-40	7.62mm	2d10	x3	200 ft.	8 lb. 8 oz.	Semi-auto	10
US Carbine M1	.30 in Short	2d6	x3	100 ft.	5 lb. 0 oz.	Semi-auto	15

Pistole Modell 35(p) saw wide service in the German army, particularly in Waffen SS and Parachute units.

Smith & Wesson 38/200: Also known as the "British Military," this revolver was simply Smith & Wesson's standard Military and Police .38 chambered to take the British .38 cartridge (which, confusingly enough, was actually .357in). It proved the most popular revolver issued to British soldiers during the war and was often carried by Commando and Airborne troops.

Tokarev Model TT33: Designed as a replacement for the Nagant, the Tokarev is based on the Colt M1911. Though intended for infantry officers, there is some question as to how many Tokarevs were actually issued during the course of the war. As noted in the Nagant's description, the Soviets favored the mass-produced submachinegun, so the Tokarev never became a common weapon in the Red Army.

Walther P'38: The Walter was designed as a replacement for the Luger. With the rapid expansion of the Wehrmacht in the 30s, a pistol that could be mass produced quickly was needed. The Walther fit the bill and was also more robust than the Luger, able to withstand the extreme conditions of the Eastern Front better than most weapons. The Swedish Army purchased Walthers in 1939.

The same statistics can be used for the Steyr Model 1912 (Weight 2 lb. 3 oz.), a sidearm used by the Austrian army. After the Anschluss, the German and Austrian armies merged and the Steyr was rechambered to take the standard German 9mm round.

Rifles

Arisaka, Meiji 38: The standard weapon of Japanese infantryman in World War II. Originally introduced in 1905, the Japanese army decided its 6.5mm cartridge was too weak in the 1930s. A 7.7mm round (2d10 damage) was developed, and the Arisaka re-barreled to fire the new ammo. Due to production problems, however, the older version continued as the standard throughout the war. The sniper's version, the M97, included a bipod.

Gewehr 43: The first German attempt to design an automatic rifle, the Gewehr 41, was a failure. It was heavy, badly balanced, and required excessive maintenance. The much-improved Gewehr 43 saw extensive service on the Eastern Front. Every model was capable of mounting a telescopic sight, and many Gewehr 43s were used as sniper rifles. The Czech army adopted the Gewehr 43 as its standard sniper rifle after the war.

Lee-Enfield No. 4: The mainstay of the British army from 1895–1957. Of the 27 different models produced, the No. 4, Mark 1 saw the most service in World War II. Variants included the Mark 1(T), a sniper's version capable of taking a telescopic site, and the No. 5, Mark 1, a shortened version designed for use in the jungle. The latter is five inches shorter, 2 pounds lighter, and has a range increment of 175 ft.

Mannlicher-Parravicino-Carcano Carbine M1891/24: Yet another shortened version of a World War I battle rifle, the Carbine M1891/24 was the standard infantry weapon of the Italian army of World War II. Although similar in design to other bolt-action rifles, its weak cartridge made it less effective.

Mauser Kar98K: The standard bolt-action rifle of the Wehrmacht in World War II, the Mauser Kar98K was an improved (and shortened) version of the 1898 model. Rugged, durable, and reliable, the Kar98K served Germany until the very end.

The same statistics can be used for the American Springfield M1903, which was licensed from an earlier version of the Mauser. The Springfield uses .30in ammunition and weighs 8 lb. 11 oz.

M1 Garand: John C. Garand's gas-operated rifle was chosen for further development after 1929 trials at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The US army adopted the resultant rifle, the M1, in 1936. Although meant to replace the Springfield M1903, pre-war production was slow enough that many Springfields remained in service. The Garand had an excellent rate of fire and proved itself the world over. Its only real downside was that it automatically ejected the clip after the last bullet was fired, causing an identifiable ping if the clip landed on a hard surface. This let all nearby enemies

know that the rifleman held an empty weapon.

Mosin-Nagant Model 1930G: Derived from the Mosin-Nagant Model 1891 (and sometimes known as the Model 1891/30), the Model 1930G was the standard bolt-action rifle of the Red Army throughout the war. A sniper's version and a shorter carbine, the Model 1938G, were also produced. Though originally intended for mounted troops, the Model 1938G (and its successor, the near-identical Model 1944G) were widely used throughout the Red Army. Both carbines use the Model 1930G's stats, but their range increment is only 100 ft.

Sturmgewehr 44: This was the first modern assault rifle, a weapon that combined the automatic fire of the submachinegun with a larger caliber of ammunition. Originally designated the MP43 to disguise its true nature from Hitler (he demanded longer range from his rifles, so the Army Weapons Office pretended they were working on an improved MP40 submachinegun), the weapon was field tested by elite units on the Eastern Front in 1943. The trials were such a success that the army demanded more and a demonstration for Hitler finally convinced him of the weapon's worth. It was christened the Sturmgewehr, or "assault rifle," and produced until war's end. The Sturmgewehr 44 uses the rules for submachineguns and has a max burst of 30.

Tokarev SVT-40: Though similar in function to the M1 Garand, the SVT-40 never had the success of the American weapon. Designed to be a more reliable version of the earlier SVT-38, the SVT-40 was nonetheless unable to stand up to harsh battlefield conditions without special care. The Red Army produced the weapon in small numbers and largely issued it to infantry NCOs. It was later withdrawn from service and converted into a sniper rifle (snipers already having very high standards of weapon care and maintenance). Soviet soldiers much preferred simple and reliable submachineguns like the PPSh.

US Carbine M1: This carbine was designed for troops whose main duty was not firing a rifle, but who nonetheless had the need for a light and handy weapon. The US produced more than six million of these weapons by war's end, and they were used throughout the army and the marines. Although not as accurate as the Garand, the Carbine M1 became a very popular weapon indeed. A variant with a pistol grip and folding stock, the M1A1, was produced for use by Airborne troops.

Submachineguns

Beretta, Model 1938A: Primarily an Italian weapon, the Model 1938A was also issued to some Rumanian and German troops (the latter referred to it as the MP (Berretta) 38(i). An easier-to-produce version, the Model 1938/42, was developed later in the war.

M3 Grease Gun: Although the Thompson was a good weapon, it was expensive and complicated to manufacture. The M3, known as the Grease Gun, was the US Army's replacement. Like the Sten gun, it was cheap to make, but effective. One interesting feature was a conversion kit that allowed the gun to shoot 9mm ammunition (1d10 damage) if .45 ammo was scarce. More than 600,000 Grease Guns had been made by the end of the war.

MP38/40: The Maschinenpistole 38 was the standard pre-war submachinegun of the Wehrmacht. Although its folding stock and woodless construction were groundbreaking, it was made with very traditional production techniques. With a simplified design, the MP40 served the German army faithfully for the rest of the war. MP40s were most commonly found in the hands of NCOs.

PPSh: Manufactured in massive quantities, the PPSh was the classic submachinegun of the Red Army soldier—entire divisions were sometimes equipped with it. Most PPSh's used the 71 round drum, though later in the war a 35-round box became available. Many German soldiers adopted the PPSh because large captured stocks were available and they appreciated its reliable and hefty ammo capacity.

Table 3-7: Submachineguns

Name	Caliber	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Action	Capacity	Max Burst
Beretta, Model 1938A*	9mm	1d10	x3	25 ft.	9 lb. 4 oz.	Auto	10, 20, 30 or 40	40
M3 Grease Gun	.45in	2d8	x3	25 ft.	8 lb. 15 oz.	Auto	30	30
MP38/40	9mm	1d10	x3	30 ft.	9 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	32	32
PPSh	7.62mm	1d10	x3	30 ft.	8 lb. 0 oz.	Auto	35 or 71	71
PPS-42	7.62mm	1d10	x3	30 ft.	7lb. 6 oz.	Auto	35	35
Sten Mark 2*	9mm	1d10	x3	25 ft.	6 lb. 10 oz.	Auto	32	32
Suomi, Model 1931	9mm	1d10	x3	30 ft.	10 lb. 5 oz.	Auto	20, 40, 50, or 71	71
Thompson M1*	.45in	2d8	x3	30 ft.	10 lb. 2 oz.	Auto	30	30

*This weapon is capable of selective fire. Switching from single shot to automatic (or vice versa) is a free action.

PPS-42: This Soviet submachinegun is forever associated the heroic defenders of Leningrad. Designed while the city was under siege, all its parts were made of stamped steel except the bolt and the barrel (allowing for very fast production). PPS-42s were sent directly from the Leningrad factories to the front line and they helped the city's defenders turn back the Nazi war machine.

Sten Mark 2: The British government decided it needed a good submachinegun in 1940. They had purchased some Thompsons from the US, but required a less expensive option. The Sten went into production in 1941 as a no frills alternative. It was cheap and ugly, but effective. The Mark 2 was the most common version, with more than two million produced throughout the war. It was copied frequently, first by resistance and partisan groups and later by the Germans themselves, who called it the MP3008 (some models of which were made to arm the German guerillas who it was presumed would spring up in the occupied Reich).

Suomi, Model 1931: In 1940 the British army's Ordnance Board opined that the Finnish Suomi was without question the finest submachinegun in existence. Certainly the Soviets came away from the Winter War of 1940 with a healthy respect for the Suomi, since they adopted its 71-round drum for their own submachineguns shortly thereafter. The Suomi was an all-around excellent weapon and it saw some use outside Finland in the armies of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.

Thompson M1: This is the US military version of the famed American Tommy Gun. Originally designed as a "trench sweeper" during World War I, the Thompson arrived too late and was never used in that conflict. Gangsters adopted it in the 30s, much to John Thompson's chagrin, and the gun's drum magazines gave it a distinctive appearance. The M1 was a simplified version, standardized to accept only the 30-round box magazine. Although heavy, it was popular with US Rangers and British Commandoes, who prized its reliability. The Chinese were so impressed with the Thompson that they started making knock offs in the 30s.

CHAPTER 4. COMBAT

We imagined every possible outcome to the imminent fighting: surrender, captivity, flight...flight, or death...a quick death, to be done with it all. Some grasped their weapons all the more firmly, dreaming of a heroic defense which would push the Russians back, and hold the line. But most of us were resigned to death—a resignation which often created the most glorious heroes of the war. Simple cowards or pacifists, who had been opposed to Hitler from the start, often saved their lives and the lives of many others in a delirium of terror provoked by the accident of an overwhelming situation.

—Guy Sajer, *The Forgotten Soldier*

The basics of combat remain the same, but firefights have a different dynamic than the dungeon crawl. Melee combat is much more rare with automatic weapons and grenades in the mix. While going prone is a rare action in a D&D campaign, it's smart soldiering to hit the dirt on the bullet-raked battlefields of World War II. Using cover is a required survival skill as well. The following rules, arranged alphabetically by topic, should allow you run tense and exciting World War II combats.

Armor and Armor Class

The World War II-era infantryman did not wear personal armor. While flak jackets did exist, they were heavy and usually only worn by aircraft crews. The one piece of armor that soldiers did use was the helmet. While helmets were not strong enough to stop bullets, they did provide some protection from shrapnel. Any character wearing a helmet gains a +2 armor bonus to his Reflex saves against grenades and artillery barrages.

In *V for Victory*, Armor Class is determined as follows:

AC = 10 + Defense bonus + Dexterity bonus.

Table 4-1: Barrages

Duration / Intensity	Short	Average	Long
Light	1d8/10	1d12/13	2d8/15
Medium	2d6/12	2d8/15	2d12/17
Heavy	2d8/15	2d12/18	4d8/20

Table 4-2: Shell Shock

Duration / Intensity	Short	Average	Long
Light	Dazed/10	Dazed/13	Shaken/15
Medium	Shaken/12	Cowering/15	Cowering/17
Heavy	Frightened/15	Frightened/18	Panicked/20

Barrages

Artillery was an important component of every major army of the war. While barrages were key to most offensives, they do not make for very exciting roleplaying encounters. Having characters sitting in a dugout for hours while Soviet shells rain down, for instance, should not be a common occurrence in a campaign. There are times, however, when you might want to feature artillery barrages in your game. The following rules can be used for anything from heavy mortars to rail guns. They give you a relatively abstract way to handle what was an everyday occurrence for thousands of soldiers.

First, choose an area of effect for the barrage (10 ft. by 10 ft. to as large as seems reasonable). Second, choose the intensity of the barrage (light, medium, or heavy), then its duration (short, average, long), and cross reference on Table 4-1: Barrages. The result is two numbers separated by a slash. The first number is the damage for the barrage, the second the DC of the Fortitude save to avoid it. Remember to add the cover save bonus (see Cover and Concealment).

When the barrage is over, all characters in the area of effect must make a Shell Shock check. Consult Table 4-2: Shell Shock and cross reference the duration and intensity again. The chart provides the DC of the Will save to resist the listed condition (see Condition Summary, pages 84-85 of the *DMG*).

Shaken, Cowering, Frightened, and Panicked are fear conditions, so bonuses to saves vs. fear apply.

Shell Shock conditions last for 1d6 rounds if the save is failed by less than 5 and 1d6 minutes if the save is failed by 5 or more. If a nearby leader successfully uses the Command skill to rally, Shell Shocked troops can make a second save with a +2 morale bonus. The results of the second save are final.

Cover and Concealment

Soldiers in *V for Victory* do not have armor or magic to keep them from harm. To stay alive, they must use cover and concealment to gain maximum advantage. The concealment rules in the *PH* (page 133) can be used as is, and smoke should be a common element in the war zone. Cover also works the same, but the associated chart has been revised to give a broader range of choices and more generous protection.

A cover save bonus is given for 100% cover, applied only to resist the effects of barrages (see above).

Fear

The Command skill is a good way to handle the morale of NPCs. One roll by a leader can determine if the troops follow their orders. This doesn't work so well with player characters, who like to control their own fate. The trouble is that players routinely send their characters into dire danger

Table 4-3: Cover

Degree of Cover	Example	Cover AC Bonus	Cover Save Bonus*
10%	Behind open a wooden fence.	+3	+1
20%	Behind a low wall	+4	+2
30%	Prone in a shallow foxhole	+5	+3
40%	Standing at a window, behind a small tree	+6	+4
50%	Behind a high wall, prone in a deep foxhole	+7	+5
60%	Inside a trench, behind a large tree	+8	+6
70%	Inside a log bunker	+9	+7
80%	Inside a stone or brick bunker	+10	+8
90%	Inside a reinforced concrete bunker	+11	+9**
100%	Underground or behind solid obstacles.	—	+10**

*Applies to Reflex saves and saves vs. barrages.

**Half damage if save is failed; no damage if successful.

without a second thought. If you want to simulate more realistic battlefield conditions, make the players take fear checks when they want to take suicidal risks like charging the machinegun emplacement over open ground. Fear checks are Will saves with a base DC of 15. Before the check, decide which fear condition will apply (Shaken, Cowering, Frightened, or Panicked; see *DMG*, pages 84–85). On a failed save, the chosen condition applies for one round. This can add tension to a firefight without taking an unlucky PC completely out of the encounter.

Flame Throwers

No attack roll is required to shoot a flamethrower. It's instead resolved as a line attack (like a dragon's breath weapon). The firer can choose the length of the line, up to the weapon's Max Range (width is always 5 ft.). Anyone in the line of effect must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take full damage. A successful save results in half damage. Anyone damaged by a flamethrower must make a second Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire. See page 86 of the *DMG*.

Flamethrowers were commonly used to attack the occupants of bunkers or caves. In confined spaces, the flames can spread out and fill a whole area. When a flamethrower's line of effect is blocked, calculate the number of additional feet the line would have traveled if not blocked and divide that number by 5. That is the number of 5-foot squares you may fill with flame. These additional squares of flame must be adjacent to each other and spread out as evenly as possible.

For example, Sergeant Stone fires his flamethrower at a 30 ft.-by-30 ft. bunker that's 50 ft. away. His line of effect goes through the vision slit, into the bunker, and to the back wall, for a total of 80 feet. If Sergeant Stone fired a 100 ft-squirt, he'd have 20 ft. "left over." Divided by 5, that gives an additional 4 squares of bunker that fill up with flame. Two squares to the left and two squares to the right (remember, they must be spread out evenly) are thus filled with flame.

Flamethrowers were rightly feared on the battlefield, making their operators instant targets to anyone in the vicinity. What's worse, enemy fire could and did ignite the fuel tanks, and many flamethrower operators were killed in this way. Whenever a flamethrower operator is shot (including long bursts from machineguns and submachineguns), there is a 25% chance the tanks will ignite, destroying the weapon and likely incinerating the wielder. The operator takes 4d10 points of damage immediately, and must make a DC 15 Escape Artist check each subsequent round to avoid taking damage again. On the round in which the weapon is removed, the operator still must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire.

Grenades and Grenadelike Weapons

Grenades are common weapons on the front line. Throwing one is bit different than making a normal ranged attack. The AC of your enemy is irrelevant because your aim is to land the grenade in a particular area. To make a grenade attack, first pick a 5-foot square that's within 70 feet of you. In open ground, you roll to hit vs. AC 10. However, there are times when you might want to toss a grenade through a window or inside an open tank hatch. In those instances, the GM should pick an appropriate AC using the following guideline.

Target	Armor Class
Open ground	10
Area of rubble or over a low wall	13
Around a corner or through a doorway	15
Through a window or over a high wall	18
Through a tank hatch	20
Through a bunker's firing slit	23

If you hit, the grenade lands on target. If you miss, it lands 1d20 ft. away in a random direction (use the Grenadelike Weapon deviation diagram on page 138 of the *PH*). Molotov cocktails explode on impact, but other grenades have fuses. Many of these fuses were hand cut in the factory, so times can vary. To determine when a grenade goes off, check the natural attack roll. If the number is even, the grenade explodes immediately. If it's odd, the grenade explodes on your turn next round (thus giving enemies a chance to dive for cover or throw the grenade back; the return throw doesn't change when the grenade will explode).

When a grenade goes off, anyone within the burst radius must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take full damage. A successful save results in half damage. Remember to apply the cover save bonus to saving throws where appropriate. Prone defenders receive a +4 to their saves (in addition to the cover save bonus, if any).

Rifle Grenades

Rifle grenades work the same way, but they can be targeted at spots beyond 70 feet and they always explode on the round they are fired.

Rifles require a special attachment to fire grenades. Attaching this device is a full-round action, as is readying the weapon to fire (this entails loading the grenade and the special blank cartridge that's required to fire it).

Machineguns

Machineguns follow a number of special rules.

Light Machineguns: Light machineguns like the BAR and Bren come with bipods to steady them. Setting up a bipod weapon is a move-equivalent action. Once set up, it can fire without penalty. It's also possible, though not always advisable, to fire LMGs "from the hip." Without the bracing of the bipod, they are much less accurate. When shooting from the hip, you can only make short bursts (see below) and the normal +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls is replaced by a -2 circumstance penalty.

Medium and Heavy Machineguns: Heavier machineguns are usually mounted on a tripod. Setting one up takes three full-round actions. Soviet weapons on Sokolov mounts can be readied in only one round, but their heavy carriage makes them more difficult to manhandle into position.

Reloading: Machineguns need a crew of two to operate at maximum efficiency. While fully crewed, it takes only one full-round action to reload a machinegun. An MG with only one crew person takes two full-round actions to reload.

Shooting: Machineguns can shoot either short or long bursts. See the submachinegun section for rules on burst fire.

Massive Damage

In D&D the Massive Damage threshold is set at 50, so if you take 50 points of damage or more from a single attack you must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or die outright. World War II firearms and artillery are certainly deadly enough for "one hit, one kill," but a threshold of 50 is too high for the genre. Once again, you should choose between the Gritty Option or the Hollywood Option. For the gritty option, the threshold is 10. For the Hollywood option, it's 20.

Pistols

Pistols follow the normal rules for ranged weapons with one exception. Pistols can be used in melee combat without provoking an attack of opportunity, however the firer takes a -2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls.

Semi-automatic Weapons

Certain weapons listed in Chapter Three: Weapons are classified as semi-automatic. When fired, they automatically ready themselves to be fired again. This drastically increases their rate of fire, but does not make them true automatic weapons (like submachineguns). The shooter of a semi-automatic weapon has two choices when making an attack.

Single Shot: If the weapon is fired only once, no special rules apply.

Double Shot: A semi-automatic weapon can be fired twice as a full-round action. Each shot suffers a -2 penalty.

Submachineguns

Submachineguns are short-ranged weapons that fire a hail of pistol-caliber ammunition. They are very useful for street fighting and were favored by the Soviets above all other armies. Depending on the weapon, they can be fired two or three different ways.

Single Shot: Some submachineguns are capable of selective fire. If only a single shot is fired, no special rules apply. Switching a weapon from single shot to automatic (or vice versa) is a free action.

Short Burst: Short bursts are used for accurate fire. Each short burst uses up 3 bullets and the attack is resolved with a +2 circumstance bonus. If the target is within the weapon's first range increment, the submachinegun inflicts an additional 1d8 damage. These rules simulate the fact that while shooting a burst increases your chance to hit, you're only likely to hit with more than one bullet at very short range. If the weapon has less than 3 bullets remaining, resolve the attack as if it were a single shot.

Long Burst: There are times when aiming is not as important as hosing an area down with a lot of lead. That's what long bursts are for. Firing a long burst is a full-round action. You can fire off a number of bullets equal to the weapon's max burst rating. You can target these bullets at one or more adjacent 10 ft.-by-10 ft. areas, and at least 10 bullets must be assigned to each. Anyone in these areas must make a Reflex save to avoid taking the weapon's normal damage. Calculate the DC separately for each 10 ft.-by-10 ft. area.

DC = number of bullets fired -2 for each range increment beyond the first.

The maximum DC for a long burst is 25.

Remember to apply the cover save bonus to saving throws where appropriate. Prone defenders receive a +4 to their saves (in addition to the cover bonus, if any).

For example, Sergeant Stone wants to break up a German attack with his trusty Thompson. He fires a long burst (a full-round action) at two 10 ft.-by-10 ft. areas. Each area has two Germans, so he decides to split his bullets equally. He's got a full clip and decides to unload the whole thing (max burst for a Tommy Gun is 30, which is also its capacity). If the Germans are 50 feet away, the DC for the their Reflex save would be 15 [number of bullets in each area] –2 [range increment] = 13. If he had wanted, Sergeant Stone could have split his bullets differently. He could have put 20 into one area and 10 (the minimum) into the other.

It's entirely possible to blow off dozens of rounds of ammo and crank up the DC. Of course, the next round the weapon will be empty...

Telescopic Sights

Most armies developed specialized sniper rifles that used telescopic sights (see the rifle descriptions in Chapter Three for sniper variants of standard weapons). Firing a scoped rifle is a full-round action (since your field of vision is restricted and it takes time to acquire targets). The scope provides the firer with a +4 circumstance bonus to hit that can only be used to offset range penalties. Effectively, a sniper with a scoped rifle can shoot out to three range increments without penalty.

CHAPTER 5. ENEMIES

Calvin Lincoln, 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 11th Airborne Division:
Within minutes, we opened up on them and killed most of them. As we walked up to see if there were any alive, a body was hollering in English. I carefully walked over to him since they [the Japanese] were known for luring you in and they could shoot you or detonate a grenade. I could see his arms were out and he didn't have a weapon. He asked me in perfect English if I could get him a priest. That stunned me. I asked him, "Where did you learn to speak such good English?" He said, "I graduated from Catholic University in Washington."

—Patrick K. O'Donnell, *Into the Rising Sun*

You can't run a game of *V for Victory* without bad guys. Who exactly the bad guys are depends on your campaign, of course, but this chapter presents some useful example stats. You can use these as is, modify them with different weapons or levels, or simply use them as guidelines when creating your own enemies. If you are using the Hollywood Option (see Chapter One), note that only major villains should gain this benefit. Typical grunts always use the Gritty Option and they must roll for hit points at 1st level (rather than receiving maximum hit points). Elite units can be given maximum hit points at first level at your option.

Unit Organization

Most of the time, your PCs will be going up against enemy units. It's thus useful to build your NPCs into squads (and occasionally a platoon). The organization of units varied from army to army, but you can use the chart below as a general guideline. Note that these designate a unit at full strength, which was rare on the front line. Officer casualties were often so high that men assumed commands beyond their rank. It was not uncommon to find platoons led by sergeants, for instance, or companies led by 2nd lieutenants.

Unit Name	Size	Commanded by
Fire-team/half squad	4-6 men	Corporal or Squad Sergeant
Squad	2 fire-teams	Sergeant
Platoon	3 squads	Lieutenant
Company	3 platoons	Captain

For most games you should use enemy units of platoon size or smaller. You can also attach small units of specialized troops, which were often organized into their own battalions and parceled out to units as needed. For example, a German rifle platoon may be given a squad of assault engineers if they expect to be attacking fortified positions.

Grunts

Sometimes you need basic stats in a hurry. Below you'll find stats for a generic grunt, at 1st and 2nd level. All you need to do is choose weapons for them and they are ready to go.

Fritz, Ivan, Joe, or Tommy

1st Level, Combat Training
Hit Dice: 1d10+1 (6 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 12 (+1 Defense, +1 Dex)
Attacks: Rifle or grenade +2 ranged; or bayonet +2 melee
Damage: Rifle (as weapon); or grenade 4d6; or fixed bayonet 1d8+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: Proletarian Spirit (factory worker)
Specialties: Close Combat
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1 (+1 vs. fear)
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9
Skills: Balance +4, Hide +2, Intimidate +2, Spot +2.
Feats: Grenadier, Power Attack, Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (rifles).
Challenge Rating: 1
Equipment: Rifle, 2 fragmentation grenades, bayonet, helmet.

Fritz, Ivan, Joe, or Tommy

2nd Level, Combat Training
Hit Dice: 2d10+2 (13 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 13 (+2 Defense, +1 Dex)
Attacks: Rifle or grenade +3 ranged; or bayonet +3 melee
Damage: Rifle (as weapon); or grenade 4d6; or fixed bayonet 1d8+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: Proletarian Spirit (factory worker)
Specialties: Close Combat
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1 (+1 vs. fear)
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9
Skills: Balance +4, Hide +3, Intimidate +2, Spot +2.
Feats: Grenadier, Power Attack, Rapid Reload, Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee

Toy Soldiers

While historical miniatures pre-date RPGs, until just a few years ago there was a paucity of World War II minis in 25–28mm scale. The field was dominated by 20mm minis, which could be used with widely available model vehicle kits. With the rise in popularity of skirmish miniatures games (like the late *Chainmail*), several miniatures companies have released ranges of World War II minis in either 25mm or 28mm. If you are looking for minis for your *V for Victory* game, I recommend the following.

Black Tree Design
http://www.black-tree-design.com/index.html
Black Tree makes my favorite line of World War II minis. They are in the larger 28mm scale, and there is a good selection of American, German, Soviet, and British soldiers, plus male and female French Resistance figures. Their "Men of War" line features minis of famous personalities, like General Eisenhower and General Chuikov (the hero of Stalingrad). Slightly less tasteful is the miniature of Hitler, but this would be perfect for an alternate history "whack the Fürher" adventure.

Wargames Foundry
http://www.wargamesfoundry.com
The Foundry has a nice 28mm range as well, sculpted by the indomitable Perry Twins. It started small, with only German paratroopers and British home guard (which UK readers would recognize as a homage to the *Dad's Army* show). They have since added some British paratroopers, German Wehrmacht, and my favorite, Chindits (see Chapter Six).

West Wind Productions
http://www.westwindproductions.co.uk
West Wind's "Berlin or Bust" line is in the more traditional 25mm scale, so they don't mix so well with the other lines. Their line is fairly comprehensive though, and includes some nice mohicaned 101st Airborne Division figs (great for D-Day adventures) and a line of vehicles.

Another option is to use plastic soldiers from companies like Tamiya and Airfix. 1/35th scale plastics are larger than 28mm figures, and usually require assembly, but the range of available troops is enormous. A cheaper, smaller alternative is 1/72nd scale, which matches well with the 20mm minis mentioned above.

weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (rifles).
Challenge Rating: 2
Equipment: Rifle, 2 fragmentation grenades, bayonet, helmet. May swap rifle for submachinegun.

Sample Squad

What follows is a sample squad from an SS formation known as the Dirlewanger Brigade. This unit was one of the vilest on the Eastern Front. It consisted of convicted criminals, poachers, and men under sentence of court martial. The Dirlewanger Brigade is notorious for its actions during the uprising of the Polish Home Army in August, 1944. The Poles, eager to liberate Moscow before the Red Army arrived, rebelled under the leadership of General Bor-Comorowski. The Germans responded by sending in SS units specialized in anti-partisan actions. This included the Dirlewanger Brigade and Kaminski's Brigade, an SS unit made up of anti-communist Russians recruited from POW camps.

In the ensuing battle Warsaw was all but destroyed. The Dirlewanger Brigade went on a rampage of raping, looting, and murder so extreme that reports of the atrocities reached the ears of Hitler himself. Brigade members even threatened other German soldiers who tried to stand in their way. Kaminski's men acted in similar fashion.

SS-Scharfuhrer, Squad Leader

3rd Level, Reconnaissance Training
Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 14 (+2 Defense, +2 Dex)
Attacks: MP40 Submachinegun or grenade +4 ranged; or knife +4 melee
Damage: MP40 1d10; or grenade 4d6; or knife 1d4+2
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: Feat of Strength (laborer)
Specialties: Terror
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12
Skills: Balance +4, Climb +5, Command +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Spot +4, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +2.
Feats: Block Fighter, Cold-Blooded Killer, Promotion (x2), Weapon Focus (MP40), Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (submachineguns).
Challenge Rating: 3
Equipment: MP40, 2 fragmentation grenades, knife, helmet.

SS-Oberschutze, Machinegunner

2nd Level, Combat Training
Hit Dice: 2d10+2 (13 hp)
Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 14 (+2 Defense, +2 Dex)
Attacks: MG34 +5 ranged; or Luger +4 ranged; or knife +1 melee
Damage: MG34 2d10; or Luger 1d10; or knife 1d4-1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: Improved Initiative (soldier)
Specialties: Special Weapons
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0 (+4 vs. shell shock)
Abilities: Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9
Skills: Balance +4, Hide +3, Intimidate +2, Spot +2.
Feats: Trench Rat, Weapon Focus (MG34),

Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (machineguns), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (pistols) and Weapon Proficiency (rifles).
Challenge Rating: 2
Equipment: MG34, Luger, knife, helmet.

SS-Schutze

(1 Grenadier, 1 Machinegun Loader, 6 Infantrymen)
1st Level, Combat Training
Hit Dice: 1d10+4 (9 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 13 (+1 Defense, +2 Dex)
Attacks: Mauser Kar98K or grenade +3 ranged; or bayonet +1 melee
Damage: Mauser Kar98K 2d10; or grenade 4d6; or fixed bayonet 1d8
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: Case the Joint (criminal)
Specialties: Terror
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -2
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 8
Skills: Appraise +2, Climb +2, Hide +3, Intimidate +3, Search +2, Spot +1.
Feats: Cold-Blooded Killer, Point Blank Shot, Toughness, Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), and Weapon Proficiency (rifles).
Challenge Rating: 1
Equipment: Mauser Kar98K rifle, 2 fragmentation grenades, bayonet, helmet. The Machinegun Loader carries extra ammo for the MG34 instead of grenades. The grenadier has a rifle grenade launcher and 5 fragmentation rifle grenades.

Sample Officer

To complement our sample squad, you'll find stats for the commander of the Dirlewanger Brigade, Dr. Oskar Dirlewanger himself, below. Dirlewanger was a sex offender, so he had something in common with his men. While Kaminski was murdered for his part in the Warsaw atrocities (his men were told he was killed by partisans), Dirlewanger survived. In a most fitting turn of events, a group of former concentration camp inmates beat him to death after the war.

SS-Oberfuhrer Dr. Oskar Dirlewanger

6th Level, Leadership Training
Hit Dice: 6d8+6 (33 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 14 (+4 Defense)
Attacks: Walther P'38 +3 melee or +5 ranged
Damage: Walther P'38 1d10+2
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Career Ability: The Healing Touch (doctor)
Specialties: Tactics, Terror
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +7
Abilities: Str 8, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14
Skills: Command +10, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +6, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (military science) +8, Logistics +7, Sense Motive +8, and Spot +7.
Feats: Cold-Blooded Killer, Expertise, Gun in a Knife Fight, Promotion (x3, plus bonus feats), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge—military science), Weapon Focus (Walther P'38), Weapon Proficiency (grenades), Weapon Proficiency (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (rifles), Weapon Specialization (Walther P'38).
Challenge Rating: 6
Equipment: Walther P'38, binoculars.

CHAPTER 6. CAMPAIGNS

These boys are so ready for tonight. They realize they are engaged in a difficult and even dangerous task. Several of them have wives and children. They know they are going to liberate a man who was one of the leaders of the secret army. I told them, long ago, that he is my husband. They know the strength of my love, my determination, my will to prevail. More than anything else, they are grateful for my assuming, despite my pregnancy, the same risks they faced over the past months, and being there tonight with them, fighting with them, fighting just like all the others in the group. Our feeling of unity, of esteem, is total—that's why desertion is impossible.

—Lucie Aubrac,
Outwitting the Gestapo

Running a military-based roleplaying campaign can be a bit different than running a fantasy game. There are some inherent issues that need to be addressed or overcome before play can begin. The primary difficulty is the placement of player characters in a military hierarchy. Players love to do their own thing, and putting them in a position where they have to follow orders all the time can be a recipe for disaster. There are, however, certain ways to make campaigns like this work.

The most important choice you have to make when starting a *V for Victory* game is the campaign background. This is the general spin of the campaign, and can be as simple as "You're all French Foreign Legionnaires." You should settle on a campaign background before your players make characters, since it will have a huge affect on how they go about it. This chapter has several specific recommendations for campaigns, chosen to address many of the issues of this type of game.

Once you know the general spin of your campaign, its time for everyone to make characters. It's helpful if everyone makes characters together, so the group can come to an agreement on thorny issues like who's going to play an NCO or officer. You should work with your players to make sure their group is well balanced and makes sense in the context of the campaign. Unless they are playing German assault engineers, for instance, the group doesn't need three demolitions experts.

When the game begins, players may complain that they have to take orders (and this is entirely in the spirit of the enlisted man!). What you should try to show them in the first few firefights is that battle is inherently chaotic. There's an old military aphorism that says that no plan lasts beyond the first contact with the enemy. In the heat of battle, it is up to local officers and NCOs to make important, tactical decisions and up to individual

soldiers to seize the initiative. Only they can have a true appreciation for what's going on in their corner of the battlefield. This means that although your players may be a part of a huge military operation, their immediate concerns are going to be a lot more localized and they'll have a great deal of choice in how they execute their orders. Battle, in other words, is the only real place that soldiers can achieve a degree of freedom. You therefore want such engagements as the focus of your campaign.

The Partisan Campaign

The Partisan Campaign is one of the best options for World War II roleplaying. It allows small groups of autonomous soldiers with a wide array of character types. People from all walks of life fled into the mountains, forests, and swamps of Europe to resist the Germans, and similar groups fought the Japanese in Asia. Politically, partisan bands did not always get along, which can create great opportunities for roleplaying. Some specific suggestions for Partisan Campaigns follow.

Pripet Marshes

Known by the Germans as "the Wehrmacht hole," the Pripet Marshes are a 40,000-square mile region of impassable swampland. German thrusts in Operation Barbarossa (the June, 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union) used the Pripet Marshes to anchor their flanks, but the Wehrmacht simply had no way of mounting operations into the swamp itself. As the panzer divisions swept forward and huge pockets of Soviet resistance were surrounded and cut off, the Pripet Marshes became a safe zone for Red Army soldiers. Thousands fled there in the summer of 1941 and they formed the core of partisan bands that were to harry the Germans until the liberation of the Soviet Union in 1944. Countless refugees, fleeing the brutality of the German occupation, later joined them.

Moscow actually organized a central command system for the partisans, and provided airdropped supplies and political officers for the continuance of the struggle. At the end of 1941 there were perhaps 30,000 active partisans fighting the Germans and their axis allies. By mid-1943 their numbers had soared to a quarter million. Attacks by partisan bands were coordinated by Moscow to coincide with major offensives, disrupting communication, destroying rail lines, and the like. While the partisans' primary foes were second-string troops, they did tie-down a good half-million troops in the Axis rear.

Ukraine

Much of Ukrainia is ill-suited to partisan warfare; there's simply nowhere to hide. Nonetheless, partisan groups dedicated to the creation of an independent Ukrainian state sprang up in the wake of the German invasion. They initially offered their services to the Germans, since both groups hated the communists above all. Hitler, however, rebuffed them and these nationalist partisans then began to fight with both the Germans and the Soviets. When the Red Army swept through Ukrainia in 1944, the partisans continued their struggle. It wasn't until the mid-50s that the Red Army stamped out the last groups of Ukrainian national resistance.

Yugoslavia

As a prelude to Operation Barbarossa, Germany invaded Yugoslavia and Greece in 1941. The outdated Yugoslavian army was swept aside with contemptuous ease by the veteran Wehrmacht divisions, who suffered only 151 fatal casualties in the entire campaign. The Croatian Ustashi, an ultra-right wing nationalist group, convinced the Axis powers to support the creation of a Croatian state, which also included Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ustashi began a murderous campaign against the Serbs in their territory, which drove many into the arms of two competing partisan organizations: the Chetniks and the Communists. The Chetniks were royalist Serbians supported by the British and Tito's Communists were, of course, supported by the Soviet Union. The Chetniks and the Communists worked together at first, but there was ideological distrust between the two groups. As the war continued, Tito proved far more successful in mobilizing resistance and he won ultimate control over Yugoslavia after the war. Tito's regime suppressed the bitter hatreds bred by the war, but the ghosts of racial strife would come back to haunt the region in the post-communist era.

The Resistance Campaign

A resistance campaign is similar to a Partisan campaign, but is more focused on espionage. While partisans take to the hills, resistance fighters live openly in occupied territory and fight the enemy clandestinely. The French Resistance, the Maquis, is perhaps the most famous of these groups, but there was organized resistance in many other countries as well. Most were in communication with the Special Operations Executive, a British organization dedicated to supporting resistance groups in occupied Europe. The SOE airdropped supplies and sometimes agents, and collected intelligence gathered by the resistance. Their task, as Winston Churchill put it 1940, was to "set Europe ablaze."

For most of the war the activities of resistance groups were limited to running intelligence networks, publishing underground newspapers, smuggling downed aircrew out of occupied territory, and engaging in a small amount of sabotage and assassination. German reprisals were brutal (for example, in retaliation for the assassination of SS gen-

eral Reinhard Heydrich in Czechoslovakia, the Germans annihilated the entire population of the village of Lidice), so resistance groups had to chose their battles carefully. Later in the war, after the Allied landings in Normandy, some resistance groups formed into units and took to the countryside like partisans. This was, in many cases, premature, as the Germans still had adequate forces to deal with inexperienced resistance fighters. For example, on D-Day the Maquis in the Grenoble region of France raised the flag of rebellion on the Vercors plateau. By July several thousand members of the resistance had gathered there, only to be decimated by a surprised glider assault by the SS.

The Elite Campaign

In most d20 System games, the PCs are much like elite troops: small in number, highly specialized, and deadly. It is thus no stretch to center a campaign around the exploits of what today is known as a special forces unit. These first saw development early in World War II, beginning with the British Commandos. They were formed to raid occupied Europe and show the Germans that the Brits still had some fight in them. The Americans followed suit with the creation of Ranger units, the earliest of which trained at the British Commando School in Scotland.

The Elite Campaign works well because it focuses on small units sent on discrete missions. Since all units of this type survived by quick strikes and fast movements, you needn't worry about heavy equipment, artillery, and the like.

In addition to British Commandos and American Rangers, you may consider basing campaigns around the following units.

Brandenburgers

Even today, few people know about the Brandenburgers, a commando unit created by the Abwehr (the German Intelligence Service) in 1939. Originally formed to capture key rail junctions and other pieces of vital terrain for advancing forces, the Brandenburgers were highly trained commandos with expertise in guerilla tactics, city fighting, outdoorsmanship, and demolitions. They recruited heavily from Germans who had lived in other countries, so their knowledge of foreign languages and customs was extensive. On many occasions they donned enemy uniforms to sow confusion or infiltrate behind enemy lines.

Chindits

The brainchild of eccentric British general Orde Wingate, the Chindits were proof of Wingate's theory that a small force could fight behind enemy lines for long periods if resupplied by air. Wingate welded together a disparate force, including Commandos, Ghurkas, and Indian soldiers. They mounted two major operations, one in February 1943 and the other in March 1944.

The Devil's Brigade

This unique unit was a joint American-Canadian formation trained in rock climbing, skiing, and amphibious and airborne operations. It fought in North Africa and southern France, but it's greatest successes were in Italy. Their climbing training served them well as the Germans threw up line after line of defenses in the mountainous terrain of Italy. *The Devil's Brigade*, a 1968 film starring William Holden, does a passable job of recounting their exploits.

Edson's Raiders

The US Marine Corps created this force after Pearl Harbor. They needed a hard-hitting strike force to attack Japanese outposts in the Pacific,

and "Red Mike" Edson and his US Marine Raiders quickly earned a reputation for hard fighting in the bloody battles that followed.

Merrill's Marauders

The 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), more commonly known as Merrill's Marauders, was an American force inspired by the Chindits. They, and their successor, Mars Force, also fought in the jungles of Burma. Samuel Fuller directed a 1962 movie about the unit that illustrates the harsh conditions of jungle warfare.

Special Air Service

The SAS was formed in the Western Desert in 1941. They specialized in long-range penetrations, using heavily armed jeeps to strike behind enemy lines. Their exploits, including the ravaging of German airfields before the Battle of El Alamein, became legendary in the British army.

Troop 3, No. 10 Commando

This particular unit of British Commandos was largely made up of Austrian and German Jews who had fled Europe and Nazi persecution, some of whom were concentration camp survivors. They trained extensively with German weapons, and with their language skills they could easily pass as German soldiers. The unit fought in the Normandy campaign, Holland, and Germany.

Other German-Jewish Commandos fought in North Africa. Disguised as German soldiers, they infiltrated Tobruk to perform acts of sabotage, but were caught when one of them was recognized by a former Berlin classmate who was now in the Afrika Korps. This episode is dramatized in the Rock Hudson film *Tobruk*.

The Penal Battalion Campaign

Victory or death wasn't the real battle cry of the Soviet Penal Battalions but it might as well have been. These units were but one reaction by the NKVD (forerunner of the KGB) to the desertion problem the Red Army faced in the disastrous first year of the war in the east. Soldiers judged delinquent in their duty were assigned to penal units, where they had a chance to redeem themselves. Penal units were often sent on suicide missions, and life expectancy was short. Each unit had a regular Red Army officer staff and a guards company to keep the penal troopers in line. Weapons were not issued to the penal troops until they entered the front line.

The Penal Battalion works well for a short campaign. The PCs, despised by friend and foe, must work together to survive extremely hazardous missions. Can they win redemption in the eyes of Comrade Stalin before they are used to trample a path through a minefield?

The Kampfgruppe Campaign

If your players won't find it too weird to play German soldiers, the Kampfgruppe Campaign can be an interesting option. After the Battle of Stalingrad, the Wehrmacht spent the rest of the war slowly losing ground to Allied forces. As Stalin dug deep into his manpower reserves, the Red Army continued to throw divisions at the dwindling Axis defenders. Operation Bagration, in which the entire German Army Group Center was destroyed by a massive Soviet assault, was the beginning of the end. As fronts crumbled and allies like Finland and Rumania deserted the Germans, they came to rely increasingly on ad hoc battle groups to stem the enemy tide. These "Kampfgruppes" were made up of whatever troops were available and they had to constantly improvise to deal with Allied advantages in manpower, airpower, and artillery.

This ad hoc nature is what makes Kampfgruppes attractive from a roleplaying point of view. Players love to make unique characters and it can be difficult to fit them all into a military campaign. The Kampfgruppe Campaign, however, allows nearly any type of character. The same group could contain a combat engineer, a member of a Luftwaffe field division, an infantry NCO, and a hiwi (German slang for Russian friendlies, who had every reason to flee the retribution of the Red Army).

Strangers in a Strange Land

Most general histories of World War II must perforce speak in generalities. It's very easy to reduce the war to its major participants, but there is a reason it was a World war. Men and women of dozens of nationalities and ethnic groups fought in the war, sometimes in very strange circumstances. A story from D-Day illustrates this point vividly. The British captured two German soldiers who were clearly not European and spoke no language anyone could understand. They were sent back to England and after some time the British figured out that the two men were from Tibet! They had been forcibly recruited in the Red Army, shipped to Europe to fight, captured by the Germans, and then pressed into service again in one of the German "Ost" battalions (which consisted of very unmotivated Soviet prisoners).

The war is full of strange tales (like the creation of an SS unit composed of Bosnian Muslims) and some of these can provide the basis for an interesting campaign. Most of these ethnic units had reasons of their own for fighting, reasons not always shared by the parent army. This type of campaign allows for both internal politics and front-line action, so it makes a good choice if your group wants something more than combat.

Here are some examples of lesser-known units that fought in World War II.

• **The Goumiers** were French colonial troops from North Africa that fought in Italy and earned quite a reputation for mountain warfare. After the liberation of France, General De Gaul actually demobilized veteran Goumier units so he could equip inexperienced Resistance fighters instead. This baffled Eisenhower and other Allied commanders.

• **The Polish Parachute Brigade** was one of many Polish units to fight in the British army. They participated in the disastrous Operation Market Garden, the subject of the movie *A Bridge Too Far*. Gene Hackman plays the commander of this unit in the film, though he doesn't do Poland proud with his terrible accent.

• **The Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB)** was a 20,000-man-strong unit that fought with the Allies in Italy. They were generally organized and armed along American lines.

• **The Japanese recruited an Indian National Army** from Indian soldiers captured early in the war. This army was meant to free India from the British, but it was crushed along with the Japanese 15th army during the "U-Go" offensive (the only real Japanese attempt to invade India).

• **Several Cossack units** fought alongside the Germans, such was their hatred of the communists. At the end of the war, the British handed over the Cossacks to the Soviets. Most faced hard labor in Siberia, while the Cossack leaders were executed.

• **The Jewish Brigade,** a unit largely made up of Jewish volunteers from Palestine, fought in the British army in the later days of the Italian campaign. After the war, they hunted down and killed Nazi war criminals, smuggled arms to their comrades in Palestine, and helped Jewish refugees escape Europe. Many went on to fight in the Israeli army.

• **The Karen** are an ethnic minority in Burma, and during World War II they fought alongside the British to expel the Japanese invaders. They, and the British officers who fought beside them, believed that Great Britain would support the Karen's desire for autonomy in the post-war era. Instead, the British Government handed power back to the Burmese and the Karen have been fighting a guerilla war for the last fifty years.

The International Anti-Fascist Brigade

Sometimes it's fun to go beyond history. The International Anti-Fascist Brigade is a fictitious unit, specifically designed to allow characters of many different nations to fight together.

During the 1930s anti-fascists from around the world traveled to Spain to fight against General Franco, who was supported by both the Germans and the Italians. These international brigades did what they could, but could not stop Franco and his allies. In World War II, many veterans of the international brigades volunteered to fight fascism once again.

In the dark winter of 1941, when the Germans were knocking on the doors of Moscow, Stalin was looking for something, anything, to stem the tide. A former member of the international brigades suggested reviving the idea and bringing veterans of the Spanish Civil War to the Soviet Union. If nothing else, a new international brigade was great propaganda. Emissaries of Stalin approached the UK and the USA to secure their cooperation. As fate would have it, FDR received the message a mere week after Pearl Harbor. He knew that there was little the USA could do to aid the USSR in 1942, so he agreed to recruit American veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade for the new effort. Churchill also agreed, and the call went out. The veterans responded, and brought new recruits with them to boot. The "International Anti-Fascist Brigade" assembled in Moscow and was ready for combat by April, 1942. Men and women from over twenty countries were represented.

Now it's the end of Spring in the Soviet Union. The seas of mud are drying and the Wehrmacht and the Red Army are ready to clash as soon as the ground is hard enough support tanks. Will the International Anti-Fascist Brigade prove its worth, or be nothing but a propaganda sham? How will the foreign volunteers react to the harsh realities of Stalin's USSR?

As an interesting historical note, many veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were denied a place in the US Army during World War II. They later suffered under McCarthyism as well. The problem? They were anti-fascists too early on and thus politically suspect!

Adventures

Once you've decided on your campaign background, you should give some consideration to the types of adventures you'd like to run. Many ideas will suggest themselves once your players have made characters. For instance, if your players are all Maquisards, many adventures will revolve around the acquisition of weapons and explosives, or the gathering and transmission of vital intelligence to the British SOE.

Here are some examples of common *V for Victory* adventures:

Patrol

There are no satellite cameras to track unit movements and dispositions. In World War II, armies got information by sending out patrols to monitor enemy activity and preparedness. The goal of many patrols was to capture enemy soldiers (or "tongues," as the Soviets called them) so they could be interrogated. Patrols are a great excuse for an adventure because they invariably consisted of small units and nearly anything can happen.

Assault

Although World War II saw the birth of mobile warfare, as typified by the German blitzkrieg, there were countless

engagements involving fortified positions. These ranged from solitary bunkers to fortified villages to huge buildings like the famous Red October factory of Stalingrad to fixed defenses like the Siegfried and Maginot lines. Attacking such positions requires planning, teamwork, and bravery. A successful assault may also include beating off one or more counterattacks (the Germans in particular excelled at organizing counterattacks quickly). Assault adventures are the most like dungeon crawls of any of these options.

Rescue

Any number of rescue operations can be played out as adventures. PCs could be trying to save men of their unit trapped behind enemy lines, downed air crew, endangered Resistance leaders, POWs, or even entire units. In February, 1942, for example, more than 90,000 German troops were cut off in the Demyansk pocket. They had to be supplied by air for several months until they could be relieved.

Bridgehead

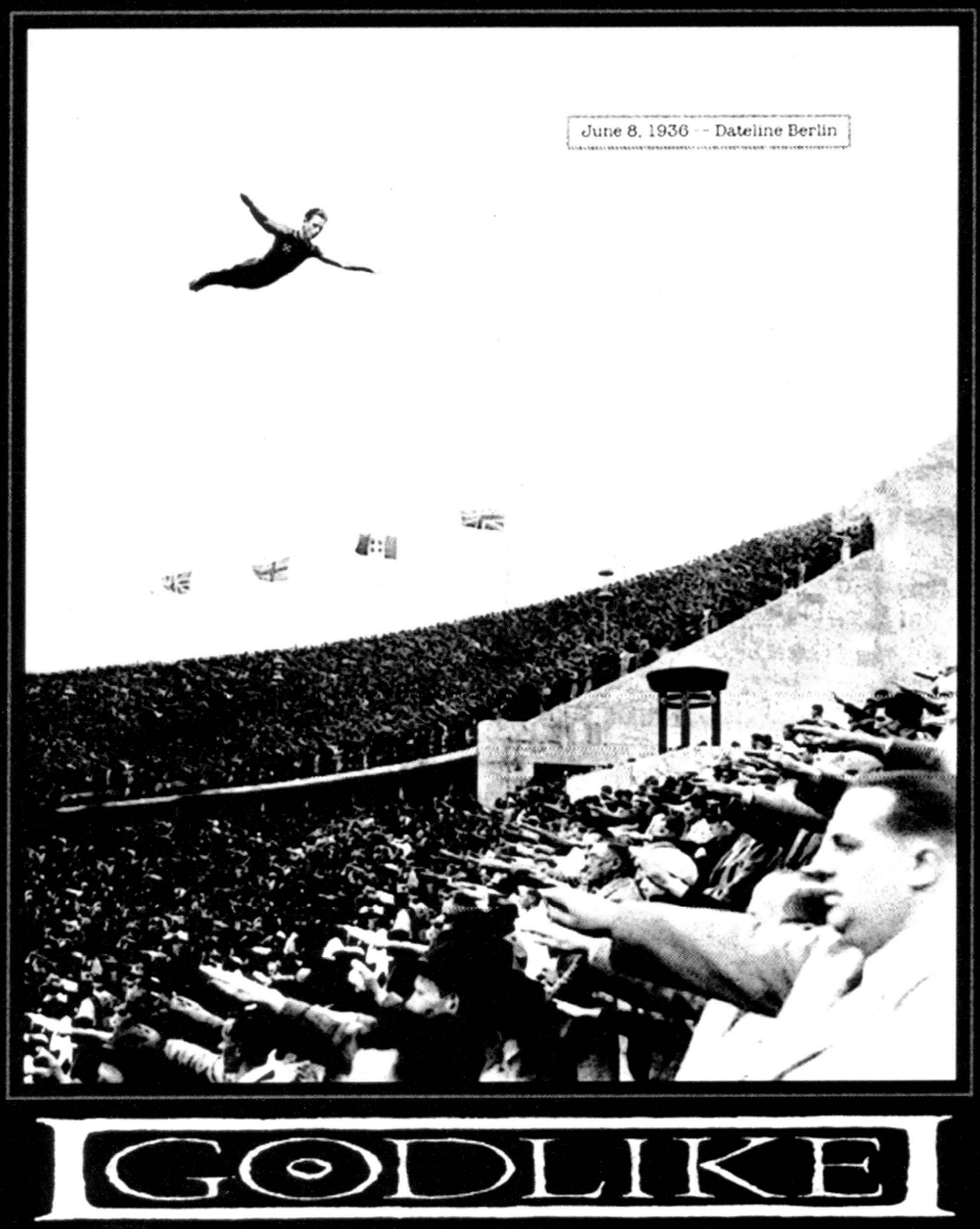
Bridges were of vital importance, especially for tank-heavy armies. Seizing a bridge and holding it against counterattacks is another solid adventure idea. This is similar to the assault option, with the added pressure of being a race against time (since important bridges were often wired with explosives to deny them to the enemy). The scenario can also be run the other way, with the PCs trying to blow a bridge before enemy spearheads can capture it. Stephen Ambrose's *Pegasus Bridge* is about the capture of a key bridge by British paratroopers the night before the D-Day landings.

Adventure Considerations

There are a few things you should bear in mind when designing and running *V for Victory* adventures. For starters, be sure to lay out plenty of cover at your combat locations. Soldiers relied on cover and so should your PCs. Characters that try to stand in the open and blaze away will get cut down in short order. Be easy on your players at first and give them a chance to adjust to the rhythm of World War II combat. You're likely to see more "ready" actions than in a D&D game and many more instances of going prone. There's no magic armor or spells here, so using cover is the best defense.

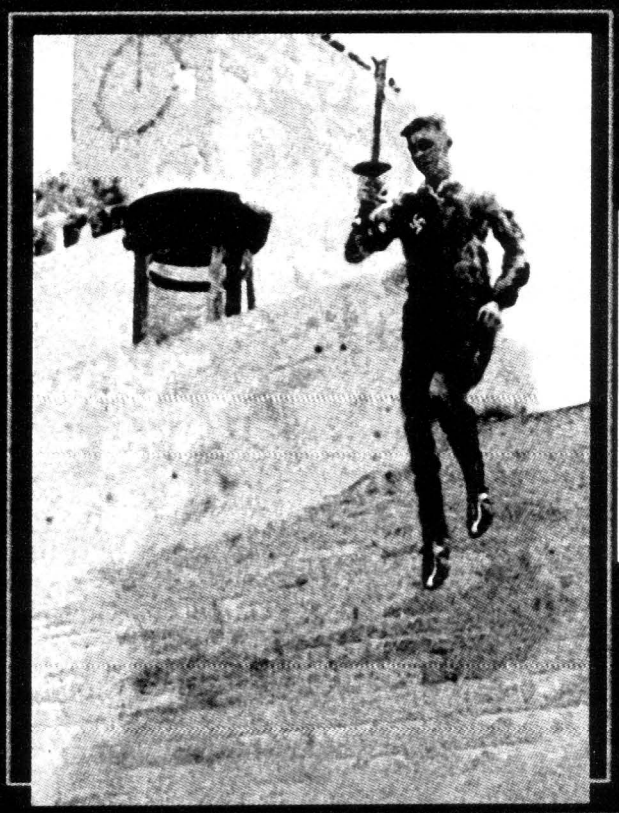
Similarly, there are no healing spells. Characters will get few hit points back during an adventure, unless it lasts over several days. You should, however, try to mimic the experience of real soldiers, who spent a certain amount of time on the front line and then were rotated to the rear to rest and refit. This time off the line can bring seriously wounded characters back to full health before the next adventure.

You should be ready, however, to deal with player character fatalities. A lucky damage roll or a critical hit can take out even mid-level characters. You can handle this in one of several ways. First, you can have everyone make up a "back-up character" in the same unit, so that there's always a new character ready to step into the limelight if things go badly. Second, you can simply use time off the line to introduce new characters, appropriate since that was the time when units received replacements for casualties. Lastly, you might want to have one potential PC amongst your readied NPCs for each adventure. A player whose character is killed could take over this character, at least until the adventure is complete. For instance, if you are running an adventure a D-Day adventure, you could have a local member of the French Resistance statted up and ready to go. He could join the Allied soldiers in helping to liberate France.



There Were Giants in Those Days Part Six: Der Flieger

Created by Dennis Detwiller



A flying man, dubbed "The Airman" by Chancellor Adolf Hitler amazed the spectators assembled for the opening of the Berlin Olympic Games, bringing, at least for the day, the pageantry of the games to a halt. For almost eight minutes, the fifty-thousand people in the stadium were silent, as the super-man completed his circuit.

The crowds watched, awe-struck, as "Der Flieger" flew into the stadium without aid of airplane or any apparatus to support him whatsoever. He circled the stadium three times, giving everyone present a chance to witness his miraculous feat, then landed to light the Olympic Torch.

The youth then lifted off once more, as the crowd erupted into a crashing wave of applause which lasted more than ten minutes. The Chancellor and other German heads of State watched the proceedings quietly from their box, which the youth then approached.

The chancellor waited for some moments while the crowd composed itself.

During his speech, Chancellor Hitler proclaimed, "So it has come to pass. Germany has shown the world that only through purity of blood, strength of deed, and fortitude of spirit can man strive to become one with the Gods." He went on to claim that Der Flieger was the first of a new race of Übermenschen, or Super-men, that would secure Germany's might as a growing world power.

August 30, 1940—This month, we have seen the fruits of our labors, and the destiny that awaits us.

This month alone, more than a score of Super-Men have joined Der Flieger, Feuerzauber, and Der Auge, standing proudly to defend the Fatherland. This fulfills the promise of racial purity, the reward for the strength of will and purpose that fuels our drive to unify Europe.

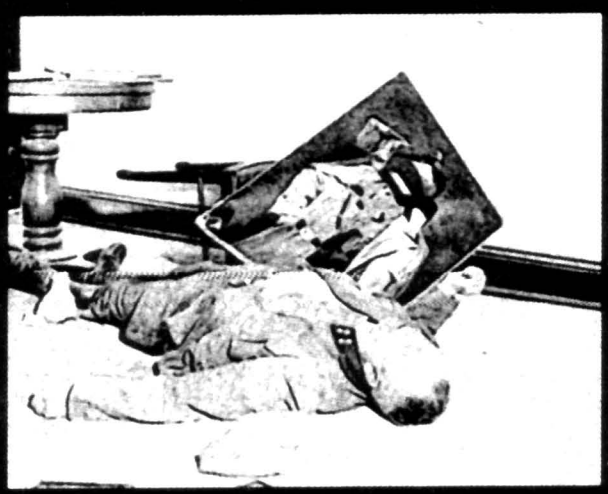
This is but the first wave of the reborn Aryan race! This is the future of Germany, of a united Europe under one flag! Under one people! Under one race! In honor of these brave warriors of the Reich, I proclaim today to be a holiday. Today, we celebrate the Day of the Super-Man!

May 9, 1943—Even now, our super-men fight on the frontlines in a dozen different countries. We push back the bolsheviks. We push back the enemies of the Aryan peoples. . .

We fight because we a right. We fight because there is no doubt that Germany will be the winner of such a conflict. We fight to save the world. . .

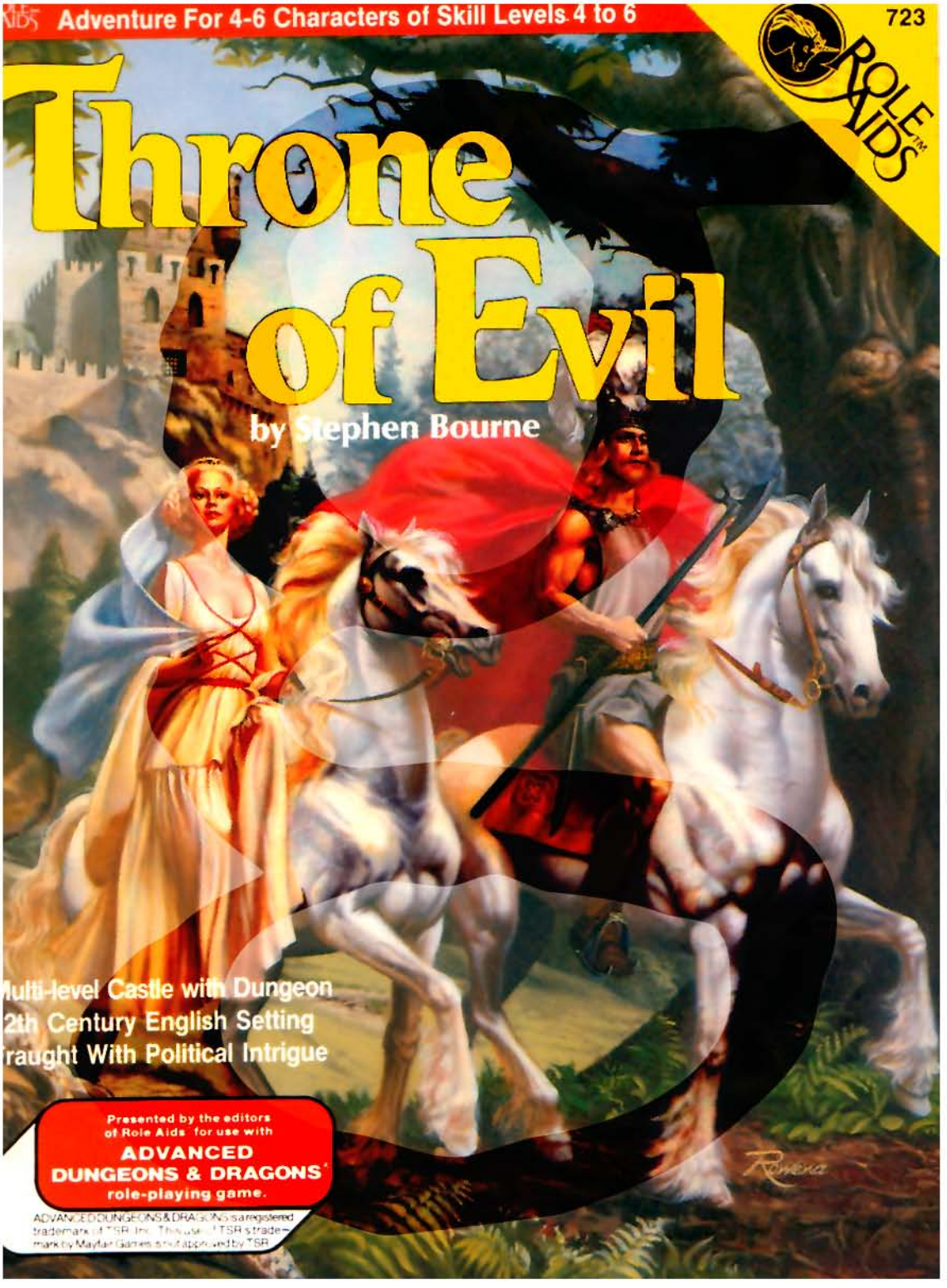
Even now, men, the likes of which the world has never seen, die to defend the Fatherland.

In Russia, France, Belgium, Denmark and Norway, our super-men have proven their worth, and we must follow them. . . Our armies must follow each stabbing thrust with wave upon wave of tanks and men. There are only two pathways awaiting Germany now: Advancement and victory . . .



. . . or death and defeat.

coming soon...



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